50 COPIES OF THE SMALLEST BOOK IN THE WORLD GIVEN AWAY WEEKLY

153 INSURANCE CLAIMS PAID.

PEARSON'S WEEKLY.

TO INTEREST, TO ELEVATE, TO AMUSE.

P.W. COUPON

Dec. 2, 1893

No. 176.] TRANSMISSION AT BOOK RATES. WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 2, 1893. ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

Sold only in 1-ounce Packets, and 2, 4, 8-ounce, and 1-lb. Tins, which keep the Tobacco in fine smoking condition.

ASK AT ALL TOBACCO SELLERS', STORES, ETC., AND TAKE NO OTHER.

SMOKERS ARE CAUTIONED AGAINST IMITATIONS.

The Genuine bears the Trade Mark, "Nottingham Castle," on every Packet and Tin.

PLAYER'S NAVY CUT CIGARETTES in packets containing 12, and boxes of 24, 50, and 100

The following extract from the "REVIEW OF REVIEWS," Nov. 1893, is of interest to every Smoker:—

THE PIPE IN THE WORKHOUSE.—The picture drawn by our Helper of the poor old man in the workhouse, puffing away at an empty pipe, has touched the hearts of some of our correspondents. One who dates from the High Alps, and signs himself "Old Screw," says:—"I have been struck with your suggestion in the October number of the 'Review of Reviews' for a scheme to supply smokers in union workhouses with tobacco. I am, I should, judged by the ordinary standards, I am the most selfish of mortals, as I never give a cent away for purposes of so-called charity; but this scheme of yours appeals at once to the sympathies of a hardened and inveterate smoker. Were I in London, I would at once start a collecting-box for the fund, and levy contributions for it on my smoking acquaintances; but, unfortunately, my business compels me to be a wanderer round the Continent for the next nine months. I can, however, do a little, and would like to contribute a pound of what I consider the BEST SMOKING TOBACCO, viz., 'PLAYER'S NAVY CUT' (this is not an advertisement), I enclose, therefore, a cheque for the amount."

WONDERFUL VELVETEEN

Ladies are invited to write for PATTERNS, which will be sent POST FREE.

Lewis's pay carriage on all orders.

In Black and all the most Beautiful Colours now worn. Fast Pile. Fast Dyed. Every Inch Guaranteed. If a Dress should wear badly or be in any respect faulty, Lewis's will Give a New Dress for Nothing at all, and pay the Full Cost for making and trimming. This quality is sold by the best drapers at 3/6, 4/6, & 5/6 yard, but Lewis's manufacture this Velveteen themselves and sell it *direct* to the public at 2/- a yard.

At 2/- A Yard.

Lewis's Wonderful Velveteen is the best for DRESSMAKING PURPOSES, as it washes well.

DRESS MATERIALS for the Present Season—WONDERFUL in Value, Style, Beauty, and Variety. Ladies, write for the New Patterns. Please mention *Pearson's Weekly*, and address—

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FOR INFANTS AND INVALIDS.

Gives health, strength, and comfort to old and young, and quiet nights to mothers and nurses. Satisfying, Strengthening, Soothing, Agreeable, Digestible, and Nourishing. Dr. RIDGE'S Patent Cooked FOOD is the OLDEST, BEST, and MOST WIDELY KNOWN and has THE LARGEST SALE IN THE WORLD.

SOLD EVERYWHERE. *CAUTION.—Refuse all Imitations.*

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INVIGORATOR CORSET

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The COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK says:—"I think them such very good stays, and those you sent for my daughter answered admirably."

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PRICES:—Girls', 4s 6d.; Maids', 5s.6d.; Ladies', 5s.6d., 8s.6d., 12s.9d.
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If difficulty in obtaining from Shops, write REAST, 15, CLAREMONT, HASTINGS, who will send Post Free on approval.

Special Attention given to Gentlemen's Corsets.

Winter

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SPECIAL NOTICE.—Patterns of our wonderful **10/6** Cloth Dress Lengths will be sent post free to any address. We give the patterns FREE, so that Ladies who write for OUR Patterns have not the trouble and expense of returning them. Write at once for a full set of patterns, and you will be astonished when you see them.

LUTAS A. D. LEATHLEY & CO.,
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CONDY'S REMEDIAL FLUID.

Full Directions free by post from

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☞ Send at once for ILLUSTRATED CIRCULAR of 40 ENGRAVINGS giving fullest particulars. Post free on receipt of address. "Health Exerciser and Home Gymnasium" sent complete (with Chart of Exercises and a "Self-Instructor," a book of 200 pages with 80 illustrations) on receipt of price:—Plain 22/-, Galvanized, 30/-, White Metal, 42/-, Brass plated, 50/-, Nickel-plated, 60/-.

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Those who have been deceived in purchasing other imitations we ask to call at our offices and carefully examine our Jewellery before buying, or send for a selection on approval, which will be sent next post on receipt of deposit of 10/-.

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IRISH CAMBRIC HANDKERCHIEFS.

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Irish Linen Cambric Handkerchief and Damask Manufacturers and Furnishers to Her Majesty the Queen, the Empress Frederick of Germany, H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught, &c., &c.

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PATTERNS FREE. PARCELS PAID.

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AND THEREBY SAVE TWO INTERMEDIATE PROFITS AT LEAST.

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£20 TO TOBACCONISTS (COMMENCING). Write for Illustrated Guide to the Business (250 pages), "post free," "How to open a Cigar Store, £20 to £1,000." TOBACCONISTS' OUTFITTING Co. (Reg.) 186, Euston Rd., London. Mgr., Hy. Myers. Est. 1866.

36 Beautiful, Jewelled, Folding, and Embossed **Christmas Cards** In Pretty Cabinet. Post free, 1/-. A. S. WALKER & CO. HOLBORN PLACE, LONDON.

RUBBER STAMPS.—Your Monogram to mark Linen or Paper. Two letters, 1s.; three, 1s. 6d.; any name, 1s. 6d.; Box, Pad, and Ink included. Patterns Free. Carriage 2d. extra. Agents Wanted. Satisfaction guaranteed or money returned. P. W. IRETON & CO., 92 Gracechurch Street, London, E.C.

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SKATES! SKATES!! SKATES!!!
1,000 PAIRS READY TO GO OFF.

A HARD winter in consequence of the hot summer. Buy before they are all gone. Don't wait and be disappointed. Every pair guaranteed. We are the cheapest house for good skates. To induce people to buy early, we offer **£1,500 in Prizes**, Silver Watches, Gold Rings, 20s. in cash, etc. Prize coupon with every pair of skates. At least one prize guaranteed to every ten coupons. Be sure and say the length of your boot in inches. All sizes, 7½ inches to 12 inches. All skates sent carriage free. **POLISHED WOOD SKATES**, narrow holes, with long straps, 2s. 6d. per pair. Superior, broad holes, with broad Albert straps, 3s. per pair; three pairs, 8s. 6d. **BEST WALNUT WOOD SKATES**, with broad straps and brass toe plates, 4s. 6d.; two pair 8s. 6d.; three pair 12s.; with brass heel plate 9d. per pair extra. **RUNNER SKATES**, for fen skating, 3s. 6d. per pair; three pair, 9s. 6d. **SKELETON STEEL SKATES**, with straps and clips to screw in heel, 2s. 6d.; three pairs 6s. 6d. **ACME PATTERN SKATES**, 3s. 6d.; three pairs 9s. 6d. Nickel silvered, 6s. 6d.; three pairs, 18s. 6d. **THE RENOWNED CALEDONIAN SKATES**, turning a screw at the heel makes the skate bite the foot firmly all over, cannot come off. Great improvements this season, so that one side can be let out more than the other. Don't buy the old kind. 6s. per pair; two pair, 11s.; three pair, 16s. Silver plated 10s. 6d.; two pairs, 20s., three pair, 28s. **VERY BEST CALEDONIAN SKATE**, with grooved blades, 13s. 6d. per pair, silver plated. All skate parts, straps, etc., etc. You get not only best skates at low prices, but the chance of a valuable prize also. Trade and wholesale houses supplied.

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MUSICAL BOXES.—To play four tunes, 2s. 3d. Extra tune-plates, four for 1s. Musical Boxes up to £20. MUSICAL PUNCHINELLO, 2s. 3d. MUSICAL WALTZER, 2s.

THE HELIKON,
A NEW MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.

EVERYBODY knows the autophone and other similar instruments, and many persons complain of the harsh, discordant sounds these make, while, in addition, they are roughly finished, and have a common appearance. Now, the Helikon is quite different. It is contained in a handsome ebonised cabinet, relieved with gold ornamental linings. It stands on four ebonized pedestal supports. The music is produced by turning a handle at the side. Six pieces of music are given with each instrument. The notes are stamped out of round compressed cardboard discs, and are placed beneath a metal lever at the top. The music is sweet, and thoroughly melodious, not a grinding, harsh, hurdy-gurdy jumble which offends the ear and disgusts the purchaser, but guaranteed to be really harmonious and thoroughly practical. You are not asked by your friends what tune it is *supposed* to be. Anyone can play the Helikon, and you can always buy extra tunes. For evening parties, picnic gatherings, the home, on board ship, and in every time and place, the Helikon is welcome. Each Helikon has six tunes given with it, selected from such popular songs as Killaloe, The Cruiskeen Lawn, Faust March, Wearing of the Green, The Guard's Waltz, Stephanie Gavotte, La Mascotte Waltz, The Gondoliers' Waltz, Home Sweet Home, The Blue Bells of Scotland, Where did you get that Hat, Bonnie Dundee, Hark, hark my Soul, In the sweet bye and bye, Jesus, Lover of my Soul, Rock of Ages, &c., &c. A full list of tunes given with each instrument. Extra tunes can be selected at 5s. per dozen, but the six given with the instrument must be left to us, purchasers, however, can say whether they wish for sacred or secular music. We have made special arrangements to send these instruments, each packed in a strong wooden case, with six tunes, as above, carriage free, for the low price of 18s. 6d. Two may be had for 33s. In a few months there will not be a home in the kingdom that has seen one of these Helikons, and can afford to have one, that will be without, but the price will be very different, as we expect in a few days it will be raised, which, considering they are infinitely superior to many automatic machines sold at 40s. and 60s., is is not to be wondered at.

THE CHAMPION SLIDE VALVE STEAM ENGINE.—Extraordinary bargain. A powerful Engine with large Metal Boiler on Platform, fitted with large slide valve Cylinder, giving great force and speed. Governors, heavy fly-wheel, pulley wheel, crank, steam pipe, plummer blocks and furnace, complete. Only 5s. 6d., carriage free. Equal in power to engines at £2. Better quality ditto, 10s. 6d.

CHRISTMAS TREE ORNAMENTS.—Splendidly-assorted Boxes, containing Fancy Boxes, Glass Balls, Candles, Flags, Silvered Reflectors, Fancy Articles, etc., 1s. 3d. and 2s. 10½d. Much larger ditto, with Birds, Animals, Japanese Lanterns, Fancy Fruit, etc., 5s. 6d., 10s. 6d., 21s., 42s. Father Christmas Mask, best quality, 1s. 6d.; also Sloper, Red Riding Hood, Cats, Witches, Masks, etc., 1s. 6d. Clown's Hats, 1s. 6d., 2s. 6d., and 4s. 6d. Every description of Masks and Christmas Articles. False Nose, 6d.; Beards, 1s. 6d.; Moustachios, 6d.; Silver and Gilt Spangles (assorted), 8d., 1s. 2d., and 2s. 6d. per box. Artificial Frost, 8d., 1s. 2d., and 2s. 6d. Silver, Gold, and Gelatine Paper, (assorted packet), 8d., 1s. 3d., and 2s. 6d. Theatrical make-up Paints, etc., 2s. 10d., 5s. 6d., and 10s. 6d. Theatrical Coloured Fires, 8d., 1s. 3d., 2s. 6d. per box. Magnesium Wire for Limelight Effect, 7d. and 1s. 2d. Wigs of every kind, Costumes, etc. Book on Amateur Theatricals, 1s. 3d.

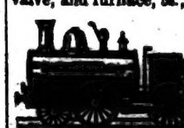
£1,500 IN PRIZES TO PURCHASERS OF OUR CHRISTMAS CARDS.

FREE Prize Coupon given in every Packet, entitling holder to a chance of 20/- in Cash, Silver Watch, &c. Send at once.

No. 1 Packet, price 2/6 free, contains 100 cards, 1 lb. in weight:—3 best Transformation Cards with changing effects, 6 Jewelled Cards of best quality, 3 two-fold Screen Cards, 4 Embossed Cards, 6 Eastern Cards, 3 Standing up Cards, 3 Embossed Cards, 3 Mountains, 3 Lakes, 6 Birds, 6 Animals, 6 Autographs, 3 Surprise Cards, 6 Floral, and 39 others assorted. Should fetch easily 12/6 if sold separately. No. 2 Packet—24 Very best Cards, specially selected, comprising the celebrated "Ideal" Cards by Raphael Tuck, Jewelled Cards, Transformation Cards, Gold and Silvered Cards, &c. Price 2/6 free. No common or Comic Cards are given in this packet. No. 3 Packet—Fifty Cards, assorted, of the value of 5/6. Price 1/3 free. No. 4 Packet—Twelve of the best quality Cards, similar in quality to the No. 2. Price 1s. 3d. free. Packet of Christmas Card Envelopes of various sizes, 30 for 7d., 60 for 1s., free.

Each purchaser of a Packet of Cards has a chance of a Sovereign in Cash or a Silver Watch. Prize Coupon in each packet. One Prize certain to every ten packets.

MODEL WORKING STEAM LOCOMOTIVES.—Every one warranted. The "Flying Scotchman," 1s. 6d. Better class ditto, "Ajax," &c., with large boiler, starting lever, two cylinders, four flanged brass wheels, safety valve, and furnace, 5s., or with steam whistle, 6s. Ditto, much larger, six wheels, 8s. 6d. COPPER AND BRASS LOCOMOTIVE, "THE KENSINGTON."—Best quality model, very strong, having also water tap, on four wheels, 10s. 6d.; larger, on six wheels, 12s. 6d.; very large, on eight wheels, with backward and forward motion, 30s. RAILWAY CARRIAGES AND TRUCKS, 1s. 6d. each. ENGINE PARTS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION. POWERFUL STEAM LAUNCH, 1s. 6d.



CONJURING TRICKS.—THE ANIMATED PIN.—Eyes and tongue move as the wearer walks along, 1s. 6d. MAGIC MIRROR, for making long and broad faces, 1s. 2d. DISSOLVING PILE OF HALFPENCE.—Halfpence vanish and leave a little die in their place, 1s. 2d. MAGIC WHISTLE.—Covers the face with flour, 1s. 2d. SHOWER OF SWEETS from borrowed handkerchief, 8d. ELECTRIC PURSE CASE.—Gives a sharp shock to anyone trying to open it, 1s. 6d.; best quality, 2s. 6d.

THE CELEBRATED BIJOU MAGIC LANTERNS AND SLIDES.

THESE sets carry the palm over all others. Each set packed in a handsome box. The Lanterns and all the slides are of superior English make. These are specially got up so as to form nice presents, and will give satisfaction everywhere.

No. 1 Set comprises a best English-made Lantern, fitted with two lenses, paraffin lamp, glass chimney, silvered reflector, 60 really Comic Figures, on 12 long slides, 3 complete Nursery Tales, each Tale having 12 pictures on 3 slides, making 36 more pictures; 2 Comic Slipping Slides, 2 Moving Panorama Slides, 1 "Good Night" Slide, 2 Lever Slides, 1 "Welcome," 1 Man Swallowing Rats, 2 Chinese Firework Slides, 1 Rackwork Slide, 1 Queen, and one Curtain Slide, making 100 pictures in all, complete with instructions, giving a picture on the sheet of 3 feet diameter. Price 10s. 6d.

No. 2 precisely similar, but having a No. 2 Lantern and No. 2 Slides, forming a larger size throughout. Gives picture 4 feet in diameter. Price 14s. 6d.

No. 3 size, much larger still, very suitable for a special present, gives a 5 feet diameter picture. Price 21s.

Bottles of SPECIALLY-PREPARED OIL, giving great brilliancy, 9d., 1s. 6d., and 2s. 6d.

THE GREAT JAPANESE FISH POND GAME.—15 fishes and 3 double jointed rods, 1s. 2d. JAPANESE MYSTIC CABINET, 100 dried shreds, when placed in water turn into flowers, birds, animals, etc., 1s. 2d. MUSICAL TOPS, 8d. and 1s. 2d. KAROO, for imitating Punch and Judy, Cock Crowing, etc., 1s. 2d. BIRD WARBLER, for teaching birds to sing.

SCOTCH BAGPIPES.—Will really play, 1s. each; best ditto, with drones, 1s. 6d. Larger sizes, 2s. 6d. and 5s. CHAMPION AMERICAN WRESTLING FIGURES, 1s. 3d. FLYING RATTLESNAKE, full size snakes will fly about the room, 1s. 2d., three for 2s. 6d. SECRET SWORD WALKING STICKS, 1s. 6d., 2s. 6d., and 5s. 6d. SELF-LIGHTING POCKET LAMP, simply turn a handle and the lamp lights itself, 1s.

GRAND ILLUSTRATED CHRISTMAS CATALOGUE—60 pages, 1d. Novelties of every description. Skates, Lanterns, Tricks, Puzzles, Clockwork Toys, Electrical Novelties, Steam Engines, Boats, Games, Microscopes, Xmas Cards, &c., &c. SPECIAL LARGE MODEL ENGINE CATALOGUE, 3d. SPECIAL LARGE MAGIC LANTERN CATALOGUE, 3d. and 6d.

J. THEOBALD & COMPANY, 43, FARRINGDON ROAD, LONDON, E.C.

If we succeed in pleasing you, will you reward us by handing this copy to someone when you have finished with it?

PEARSON'S WEEKLY.

TO INTEREST TO ELEVATE, TO AMUSE.

No. 176.] TRANSMISSION AT BOOK RATES. WEEK ENDING DEC. 2, 1893. ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

PETER NODDY.

PETER NODDY comes at night,
Down the chimney, so they say,
Sews our eyelids fast and tight
Till the break of day.
And never yet has anybody
Caught a glimpse of Peter Noddy.

Often have I set my chair
By the fire, to watch for him,
But he took me unaware
In the shadows dim.
And before my eyes could view him,
He had popped his needle through them.

Is his thread a moonbeam white,
Stolen from the sky, I wonder?
Or, perhaps he tears the slight
Spiderwebs asunder,
And from out their glossy shreds,
Twines and spins his lissome threads.

And his fingers are so deft,
And his needle is so keen,
Not a scar or mark is left,
Where its point has been.
So he comes and so he goes,
Whence or whither, no one knows.

A DECLINE IN OIL.

"DON'T you think," remarked Mrs. Bullion, settling herself into a new easy-chair, "that after the mint of money we have spent on our villa, there is still something lacking?"

"You are right about that," answered Mr. Bullion, "and I think I know what the trouble is. With all our fine furniture and brick-back, and sich things, the walls are as bare as a pig's back. Now, don't you see where the lack comes in?"

"Goodness gracious! so I do. Why, we've forgot about the pictures."

"Jes' so. What we want is paintings—oil paintings. I saw some advertised to-day for sale at auction, and it's lucky we thought of it in time, for these artist fellows are pretty stiff about prices, you know."

"But is this a good time to buy?"

"Couldn't be better, my dear. They are all painted in oil, the advertisement says so, and I see by another part of the paper that oil is cheaper than it has been for a year past. I'll rush down and get the lot."

THE COSTERS AND THEIR DEAD.

A COSTERMONGER'S death is followed by some strange, not to say weird, scenes. The other day I was in Clerkenwell, the head-quarters, by-the-way, of the London coster, a few hours after a well-known stall-keeper had breathed his last. A huge crowd with barrows innumerable was congregated outside his lodgings, and I gathered that each person was to be allowed to look upon the body of the dead man.

This is a rule which is always observed by the coster. If a man, no matter whom, calls to see the corpse after the lid has been screwed down the coffin is opened without demur. An undertaker told me that he often has to screw and unscrew the lid of a coffin as many as seven times.

Wakes are very popular among the Clerkenwell costers. The corpse is dressed in its best clothes, after which it is placed in a sitting posture on the bed, and the friends talk to it half through the night.

Every costermonger has an ambition to have a fine funeral, and he usually gets it. Thirty pounds is frequently paid by them for a single burial; this includes a heavy oak coffin with plenty of brass about it. Considering that these people are extremely poor, it may be wondered how they can afford such a large sum. The fact is, undertakers will often provide a first-class funeral on spec, relying to be paid out of the proceeds of a public-house concert, which is invariably held by brother costers on behalf of the bereaved family.

A FEW WORDS ON SHORT SIGHT.

THERE are few more widespread delusions than that which encourages short-sighted people to believe that as they increase in years their sight will improve. This may happen once in a while, but it is the exception, and at the best the amelioration will not take place until advanced age has been attained.

If every short-sighted child were taken to an oculist immediately the defect is discovered there would be fewer short-sighted people about. The disease can frequently be cured by the use of suitable glasses, but there is no greater mistake than to imagine that because a child can see through a pair of glasses they are suited to its eyes.

Short-sighted people should avoid *pince-nez*. The droop of this form of spectacle makes it a bad one, for the centre of the glass through which the objects should be regarded is scarcely ever on a level with the pupil of the eye. The consequence is a constant straining, which, though slight, is sufficient in time to cause further damage to the vision.

ONLY PLAYING BLIND MAN'S BUFF.

DR. K. is engaged to a young lady, whom he is permitted to visit three times a week.

Her mother, a person with a strict sense of propriety, disapproves of much familiarity, especially kissing, between the parties. Unfortunately, her domestic duties prevent her from exercising as close a supervision over the couple as she could wish, wherefore she has arranged to have a little niece with her on visiting days to mount guard in the drawing-room, feeling assured that the presence of the dear child will suffice to keep the young couple within the bounds of decorum.

One day mamma had something of importance to communicate to her daughter, and, going straight into the room, she was horrified to see her seated on the young man's knees, with her arms round his neck, while little Elly was groping about the furniture with her eyes blindfolded.

"Doctor!" she angrily exclaimed; and Elly said:

"Oh, aunty, you mustn't mind, we are only playing 'Blind Man's Buff' again so nicely!"

THE VALUE OF ABSOLUTE RUBBISH.

ROUND about the Mile End Road one may see barrows stocked with bits of old iron, rusty nails, rope, and other unconsidered trifles, which, to the casual observer, would appear to be of no monetary value whatever. That these seemingly useless things provide an income, however, was demonstrated to me by a trader with whom I had a conversation the other night.

"Down here in the East-end," said my informant, "everything is of some value, and nothing goes to waste. Every morning I go out with my son and look into the pails which are left outside shops for the dustman to empty. We often come across old brushes and combs, which, after a little washing, are easily sold for a penny or twopence apiece.

"Very frequently we get hold of a broken looking-glass, for pieces of which I get a halfpenny. Old tooth-brushes, too, I can sell, after they have been thoroughly cleaned; and, as for old cigar ends, why, I grinds 'em into snuff, which I sells cheap—on the strict qt., mind, for it's agin' the law.

"I don't collect all my stock myself, though. I'm regularly supplied by one or two old women, who go about seeing what they can pick up. They bring me what they've got of an evening, and I select the articles which I think will be useful. One of 'em always gets a shilling out of me in the course of a week.

"I also get the sweepings out of an office or two. Old penholders, nibs, half-used copy-books, and gum-brushes all come in handy. I sell 'em in time.

"You want to know what was my best 'find'? Well, I once came across a ten-p'un' note in a bucket of dust, but I returned it to the owner. He gave me a shilling as a reward of honesty. On an average I make about four shillings a day profit."

A WORD TO THOSE IN WANT OF WORK.

SCARCELY a day passes without our receiving a number of appeals from organisers of the charitable schemes which have sprung into existence all over the country to cope with the terrible misery and suffering which has resulted from the general depression of trade.

It is not in my power to give lucrative permanent employment to the very large numbers of men whose hands are at the present moment lying idle through no fault of their own, but it is in my power to do something towards alleviating this distress by the following scheme.

I want a large number of specimen copies of *Pearson's Weekly*, *Search Light*, and *Short Stories* distributed throughout the United Kingdom, and I am willing to pay fair wages to those who undertake the work.

In order to ensure the important fact that only really deserving cases are dealt with, and that the distribution is carried out in a fair and honest manner, applications must be made through clergymen.

Each clergyman applying must consider himself personally responsible for the fact that anyone whom he has selected for the work is capable of distributing the copies in a proper manner, and must forward a declaration to that effect to this office, together with the name and address of the would-be worker.

As the poor of our big cities are, as a rule, better looked after in the matter of charities than those of our smaller towns, I have decided to confine the work to towns and villages with populations of not over 30,000 in England, and 15,000 in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

It will very likely be impossible to entertain all the applications made for employment. Therefore, in the event of a large number of applications coming to hand from one place, those bearing the earliest postmark will be selected.

The distribution will take place on Saturday, Dec. 9th, and applications must reach this office by Dec. 2nd with the envelopes marked WORKER.

The wages paid will be at the rate of 10s. per thousand copies. No person may distribute fewer than five hundred or more than one thousand. When we hear from the clergymen interested that the work has been completed, the money will be sent to them, and they will hand it over to those who have performed their duty in an honest manner.

TRAVELLER (in haste): "Am I in time for the next train to Mudbank, porter?"

Porter: "Plenty of time, sir—10.50, to-morrow morning."

PROUD PAPA (playfully): "Whose little boy are you?"

Little Johnny (seriously): "I'm your little boy, but I has been washed."

YOUNG WIFE: "I took great pains with that cucumber salad, John, and I hope you enjoyed it."

Husband (anxiously): "I'm afraid, my dear, that I took great pains with it, too."

NED (who has tied the jam pot to the cat's tail): "Mamma told me not to take any preserves out of the cupboard, and I'm not going to do it; but if you go out in the back yard and call Kitty, Jack, I don't think any harm will be done."

JOHNSON: "Were you at the concert, Jones?"

Jones: "Yes, part of the time."

Johnson: "Did you hear me sing 'The Wolf?'"

Jones: "'The Wolf?' How did it go?"

Johnson (singing): "Whilst the wolf, in nightly prowl, bays the moon with hideous how-w-w-l."

Jones (expressively): "Oh, yes; I remember the hideous howl."

You have read "Robinson Crusoe," of course. Well, if you want a good laugh, read "The New Robinson Crusoe," by W. L. Alder, in the Xmas number of "P.W." He tells of the adventures of a temporarily demented man, who attempted to imitate old Crusoe's mode of life on a desert island, and of the dreadful muddles he got into. The fact that it is illustrated by that prince of humourous artists, Fred Barnard, does not make it any less worth looking at. There are many other beautifully illustrated stories and articles in this bumper threepennyworth.

OLGA DAVIDOFF'S HUSBAND.

By GRANT ALLEN.

CHAPTER I.

TOBOLSK, though a Siberian metropolis, is really a very pleasant place to pass a winter in.

The Davidoffs, who belonged to the most advanced section of mercantile society in all Tobolsk, were not originally Siberians, or even Russians, by birth or nationality. Old Mr. Davidoff, the grandfather, who founded the fortunes of the family in St. Petersburg, was a Welsh Davids, and he had altered his name by the timely addition of a Slavonic suffix in order to conciliate the national susceptibilities of Orthodox Russia.

His son, Dimitri, whom for the same reason he had christened in honour of a Russian saint, removed the Russian branch of the house to Tobolsk (they were in the Siberian fur trade), and there marrying a German lady of the name of Freytag, had one daughter and heiress, Olga Davidoff, the acknowledged belle of Tobolskan society.

The winter of 1890 was a very cold one throughout Siberia. The rivers froze unusually early, and troikas had entirely superseded torosses on all the roads as early as the very beginning of October. Still, Tobolsk was exceedingly gay for all that; in the warm houses of the great merchants, with their tropical plants kept at summer heat by stoves and flues all the year round, nobody noticed the exceptional rigour of that severe season.

Balls and dances followed one another in quick succession, and Olga Davidoff, just twenty, enjoyed herself as she had never before done in all her lifetime. It was such a change to come to the concentrated gaieties and delights of Tobolsk, after six years of old Miss Waterlow's Establishment for Young Ladies, at The Laurels, Clapham.

That winter, for the first time, Baron Niaz, the Buriat, came to Tobolsk.

Exquisitely polished in manners, and very handsome in face and bearing, there was nothing of the Tartar anywhere visible about Baron Niaz. He had been brought up in Paris, at a fashionable Lycée, and he spoke French with perfect fluency, as well as with some native sparkle and genuine cleverness. His taste in music was unimpeachable; even Madame Davidoff candidly admitted that his performances upon the violin were singularly brilliant, profound, and appreciative.

Moreover, though a Buriat chief, he was a most undoubted nobleman; at the Governor's parties he took rank, by patent of the Emperor Nicholas as a real Russian Baron of the first water. To be sure, he was nominally a Tartar; but what of that? His mother and his grandmother, he declared, had both been Russian ladies; and you had only to look at him to see that there was scarcely a drop of Tartar blood still remaining anywhere in him.

Olga Davidoff was fairly fascinated by the accomplished young Baron. She met him everywhere, and he paid her always the most marked and flattering attention. He was a Buriat, to be sure; but at Tobolsk, you know——. Well, one mustn't be too particular about these little questions of origin in an Asiatic city.

It was at the Governor's dance, just before Christmas, that the Baron got his first good chance of talking with her for ten minutes alone among the fan palms and yuccas in the big conservatory. There was a seat in the far corner beside the flowering oleander, where the Baron led her after the fourth dance, and leant over her respectfully as she played with her Chinese fan, half trembling at the declaration she knew he was on the point of making to her.

"Mademoiselle Davidoff," the Baron began in French, with a lingering cadence as he pronounced her name, and a faint tremor in his voice that thrilled responsively through her inmost being—"Mademoiselle Davidoff, I have been waiting long for this opportunity of speaking to you alone, because I have something of some importance—to me, at least, mademoiselle—about which I wish to confer with you. Mademoiselle, will you do me the honour to listen to me patiently a minute or two? The matter about which I wish to speak to you is one that may concern yourself, too, more closely than you at first imagine."

What a funny way to begin proposing to one! Olga Davidoff's heart beat violently as she answered as unconcernedly as possible, "I shall be glad, M. le Baron, I'm sure, to listen to any communication that you may wish to make to me."

"Mademoiselle," the young man went on almost timidly—how handsome he looked as he stood there bending over her in his semi-barbaric Tartar uniform!—"Mademoiselle, the village where I live in our own country is a lonely one among the high mountains. You do not know the Buriat country—it is wild, savage, rugged, pine-clad, snow-clad, solitary, inaccessible, but very beautiful."

Olga looked at him and smiled quietly. She saw at once how he wished to break it to her, and held her peace like a wise maiden.

"Yes, mademoiselle," the young man went on, flooding her each moment with the flashing light from his great luminous eyes: "my village in the Buriat country lies high up, beside the eternal snows. But though we live alone there, so far from civilisation that we seldom see even a passing traveller, our life is not devoid of its own delights and its own interests. I have my people all around me; I live in my village as a little prince among his own subjects. My people are few, but they are very faithful. Mademoiselle has been educated in England, I believe?"

"Yes," Olga answered. "In London, M. le Baron. I am of English parentage, and my father sent me there to keep up the connection with his old fatherland, where one branch of our house is still established."

"There, mademoiselle, you will doubtless have read the tales of Walter Scott?"

Olga smiled curiously.

"Yes," she said, amused at his *naïveté*, "I have certainly read them."

She began to think that after all the handsome Buriat couldn't mean really to propose to her.

"Well, you know, in that case, what was the life of a Highland chieftain in Scotland, when the Highland chieftains were still practically all but independent. That, mademoiselle, is exactly the life of a Buriat nobleman under the Russian Empire. He has his own little territory and his own little people; he lives among them in his own little antiquated fortress; he acknowledges nominally the sovereignty of the most orthodox Tsar, and even perhaps exchanges for a Russian title the Tartar chieftainship handed down to him in unbroken succession from his earliest forefathers.

"But, mademoiselle," the young man went on again, playing more nervously now than ever with the jewelled hilt of his dress sword, "there is one thing still wanting to my happiness among our beautiful Siberian mountains. I have no lovely châtelaine to help me guard my little feudal castle. Mademoiselle, the Buriat women are not fit allies for a man who has been brought up among the civilisation and the learning of the great Western cities. He needs a companion who can sympathise with his higher tastes; who can speak with him of books, of life, of art, of music. Our Buriat women are mere household drudges; to marry one of them would be utterly impossible.

"Mademoiselle, my father and my grandfather came away from their native wilds to seek a lady who would condescend to love them in the polite society of Tobolsk. I have gone further afield; I have sought in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg. But I saw no lady to whose heart my heart responded till I came back once more to old Tobolsk. There, mademoiselle, there I saw one whom I recognised at once as fashioned for me by heaven. Mademoiselle Davidoff—I tremble to ask you—I love you—will you share my exile?"

Olga looked at the handsome young man with unconcealed joy and admiration. "Your exile!" she murmured softly, to gain time for a moment. "And why your exile, M. Le Baron?"

"Mademoiselle," the young Buriat continued very earnestly, "I do not wish to woo or wed you under false pretences. Before you give me an answer, you must understand to what sort of life it is that I venture to invite you. Our mountains are very lonely; to live there would be indeed an exile to you, accustomed to the gaieties and the vortex of London." (Olga smiled quietly to herself, as she thought for a second of the little drawing-room at The Laurels, Clapham.) "But if you consent to live in it with me I will do my best to make it as easy for you as possible. You will have music, books, papers, amusements—but not society—during the six months of summer which we must necessarily pass at my mountain village; you shall visit Tobolsk, Moscow, St. Petersburg, London—which you will—during the six months of holiday in winter; above all, you shall have the undying love and devotion of one who has never loved another woman—Alexander Niaz. Mademoiselle, you see the conditions. Can you accept them? Can you condescend of your goodness to love me—to marry me?"

Olga Davidoff lifted her fan with an effort, and answered faintly:

"M. le Baron, you are very flattering. I—I will try my best to deserve your goodness."

Niaz took her pretty little hand with his old-fashioned politeness, and raised it chivalrously to his trembling lips.

"Mademoiselle," he said, "you have made me eternally happy. My life shall be passed in trying to prove my gratitude to you for this condescension."

"I think," Olga answered, shaking from head to foot—"I think, M. le Baron, you had better take me back into the next room to my mother."

CHAPTER II.

OLGA DAVIDOFF'S wedding was one of the most brilliant social successes of that Tobolsk season. The Baron looked as gorgeous as he was handsome in his half-Russian, half-Tartar uniform, and his Oriental display of pearls and diamonds. Olga herself was the prettiest and most blushing bride ever seen in Tobolsk—a simple English girl, fresh from the proprieties of The Laurels at Clapham, among all that curious mixed cosmopolitan society of semi-civilised Siberians, Catholic Poles, and orthodox Russians.

As soon as the wedding was fairly over, the bride and bridegroom started off by toross to make their way across the southern plateau to the Baron's village.

It was a long and dreary drive, that wedding tour, in a jolting carriage over Siberian roads, resting at wayside posting-houses, bad enough while they were still on the main line of the Imperial mails, but degenerating into true Central-Asian caravanserais when once they had got off the beaten track into the wild neighbourhood of the Baron's village. Nevertheless, Olga Davidoff bore up against the troubles and discomforts of the journey with a brave heart, for was not the Baron always by her side, and who could be kinder, or gentler, or more thoughtful than her Buriat husband?

Yes, it was a long and hard journey, up among those border mountains of the Chinese and Tibetan frontier; but Olga felt at home at last when, after three weeks of incessant jolting, they arrived at the Buriat mountain stronghold, under cover of the night; and Niaz led her straightway to her own pretty little European boudoir, which he had prepared for her beforehand, at immense expense and trouble, in his upland village.

The moment they entered, Olga saw a pretty little room, papered and carpeted in English fashion, with a small piano over in the corner, a lamp burning brightly on the tiny side-table, and a roaring fire of logs blazing and crackling upon the simple stone hearth. A book or two lay upon the shelf at the side; she glanced casually at their titles as she passed, and saw that they were some of Tourgénieff's latest novels, a volume each of Tennyson, Browning, Carlyle, and Swinburne, a Demidoff, an Émile Augier, a *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and a late number of an English magazine. She valued these things at once for their own sakes, but still more because she felt instinctively that Niaz had taken the trouble to get them there for her beforehand in this remote and uncivilised corner.

She turned to the piano; a light piece by Sullivan lay open before her, and a number of airs from Chopin, Schubert, and Mendelssohn were scattered loosely on the top one above the other. Her heart was too full to utter a word, but she went straight up to her husband, threw her arms tenderly around his neck, and kissed him with the utmost fervour. Niaz smoothed away her wavy fair hair gently with his hand, and his eyes sparkled with conscious pleasure as he returned her caress and kissed her forehead.

Week after week rolled away at the fort, and though Olga had absolutely no one to whom she could speak except her own husband (for the Buriats knew no Russian save the word of command), she didn't find time hang heavily on her hands in the quaint, old-fashioned village. The walks and rides about were really delightful; the scenery was grand and beautiful to the last degree; the Chinese-looking houses and Tartar dress were odd and picturesque, like a scene in a theatre. It was all so absurdly romantic.

And Niaz—well, Niaz loved her distractedly. No husband on earth could possibly love a woman better.

Still, Olga could never understand why he sometimes had to leave her for three or four days together, and why, during his absence, when she was left all alone at night in the solitary fort with those dreadful Buriats, they kept watch and ward so carefully all the time, and seemed so relieved when Niaz came back again. But whenever she asked him about it, Niaz only looked grave and anxious, and replied with a would-be careless wave of the hand that part of his duty was to guard the frontier, and that the Tsar had not conferred a title and an order upon him for nothing. Olga felt frightened and disquieted on all such occasions, but somehow felt, from Niaz's manner, that she must not question him further upon the matter.

One day, after one of these occasional excursions, Niaz came back in high spirits, and kissed her more tenderly and affectionately than ever. After dinner, he read to her out of a book of French poems a grand piece of Victor Hugo's, and then made her sit down to the piano and play him his favourite air from Der Freischutz twice over. When she had finished, he leant back in his chair and murmured quietly in French (which they always spoke together): "And this is in the mountains of Tartary! One would say a soirée of St. Petersburg or of Paris."

Olga turned and looked at him softly. "What is the time, dearest Niaz?" she said with a smile. "Shall I be able to play you that dance of Pinsuti's?"

Niaz pulled out his watch and answered quickly: "Only ten o'clock, darling. You have plenty of time still."

Something in the look of the watch in his hand struck Olga as queer and unfamiliar. She glanced at it sideways, and noticed hurriedly that Niaz was trying to replace it unobserved in his waistcoat pocket. "I haven't seen that watch before," she said suddenly; "let me look at it, dear, will you?"

Niaz drew it out and handed it to her with affected nonchalance, but in the undercurrent of his expression Olga caught a glimpse of a hang-dog look she had never before observed in it. She turned over the watch and looked on the back. To her immense surprise, it bore the initials "F. de K." engraved upon the cover.

"These letters don't belong to you, Niaz," she said, scanning it curiously.

Niaz moved uneasily in his chair. "No," he answered, "not to me, Olga. It's—it's an old family relic—an heirloom, in fact. It belonged to my mother's mother. She was—a Mademoiselle de Kérouac, I believe, from Morbihan, in Brittany."

Olga's eyes looked him through and through with a strange, new-born suspicion. What could it mean? She knew he was telling her a falsehood. Had the watch belonged—to some other lady? What was the meaning of his continued absences? Could he—but no. It was a man's watch, not a lady's. And if so—why, if so, then Niaz had clearly told her a falsehood in that too, and must be trying to conceal something about it.

That night, for the first time, Olga Davidoff began to distrust her Buriat husband.

CHAPTER III.

SOME days later Niaz went on an expedition again, "on the Tsar's service for the protection of the frontier," and took more than half his able-bodied Tartars on the journey with him. Olga had never felt so lonely before, surrounded now by doubt and mystery in that awful solitary stronghold. The watch weighed gloomily upon her frightened spirits.

Niaz was gone for three days, as often happened, and on the fourth night, after she had retired to her lonely bedroom, she felt sure she heard his voice speaking low somewhere in the courtyard.

At the sound she sprang from her bed and went to the window. Yes, there, down in the far corner of the yard, without lights or noise, and treading cautiously, she saw Niaz and his men filing quietly in through the gloom, and bringing with them a number of boxes.

Her heart beat fast. Could it be some kind of smuggling? They lay so near the passes into Turkestan and China, and she knew that the merchant track from Yarkand to Semipalatinsk crossed the frontier not far from Niaz's village.

Huddling on her dress hastily, she issued out, alone and terrified, into the dark courtyard, and sought over the whole place in the black night for sight of Niaz. She could find him nowhere.

At last she mounted the staircase to the mouldering rampart. Generally the Tartar guards kept watch there continually, but to-night the whole place seemed somehow utterly deserted. She groped her way along till she reached the far corner by a patch of ground which Niaz had told her was the Tartar burial place.

There she came suddenly upon a great crowd of men below on the plain, running about and shouting wildly, with links and torches. Niaz stood in the midst, erect and military, with his Russian uniform gleaming fitfully in the flickering torchlight. In front of him six Turcoman merchants, with their hands bound behind their backs, knelt upon the ground, and beside him two Tartars held by either arm a man in European dress, whom Olga recognised at once as the English traveller from India by way of the Himalayas. Her heart stood still within her with terror, and she clung there, mute and unseen, upon the rampart above, wondering what in Heaven's name this extraordinary scene was going to end in.

The Princess of Wales is looking forward to next Friday for two reasons—because it is her birthday, and because the December number of "Search Light" comes out on that day. My readers will join me in wishing H.R.H. many happy returns of the day, and a pleasant hour with the Henrietta Street Monthly!

What could it mean? What could Niaz be doing in it? Great God, it was too horrible!

A Tartar came forward quietly from the crowd with a curved sword. At a word from Niaz he raised the sword aloft in the air. One second it glanced bright in the torchlight; the next second a Turcoman's head lay rolling in the dust. Olga opened her mouth to scream at the horrid sight, but happily her voice forsook her as in a dream, and she stood fixed to the spot in a perfect fascination of awe and terror.

Then the Tartar moved on, obedient to a word and a nod from Niaz, and raised his sword again above the second Turcoman. In a moment the second head too rolled down quietly beside the other. Without a minute's delay, as though it formed part of his everyday business, the practised headsman went on quietly to the next in order, and did not stop till all six heads lay grim and ghastly in the dust together. Olga shut her eyes, but still could not scream for very horror.

Next, Niaz turned to the English traveller, and said something to him in his politest manner. Olga couldn't catch the words themselves because of the distance, but she saw from his gestures that he was apologising to the Englishman for his rough treatment. The Englishman in reply drew out and handed to Niaz a small canvas bag, a purse, and a watch. Niaz took them, bowing politely. "Hands off," he cried to the Tartars in Russian, and they loosed their prisoner. Then he made a sign, and the Englishman knelt. In a moment more his head lay rolling in the dust below, and Niaz, with a placid smile upon his handsome face, turned to give orders to the surrounding Tartars.

Olga could stand it no more. She dared not scream or let herself be seen; but she turned sick at heart, and groped her way, half paralysed by fear, along the mouldering rampart, and then turned in at last to her own bedroom, where she flung herself upon the bed in her clothes, and lay, tearless but terrified, the whole night through in blinding misery.

She did not need to have it all explained to her. Niaz was nothing more, after all, than a savage Buriat robber chieftain.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT a terribly long hypocrisy and suspense those six weeks of dreary waiting, before an answer to her letter could come from Tobolsk, and the Governor could send a detachment of the military to rescue her from this nest of murderous banditti!

How Olga hated herself for still pretending to keep on terms with Niaz! How she loathed and detested the man with whom she must yet live as wife for that endless time till the day of her delivery!

And Niaz couldn't help seeing that her manner was changed towards him, though he flattered himself that she had as yet only a bare suspicion, and no real knowledge of the horrible truth. What a sad thing that she should ever even have suspected it! What a pity if he could not keep her here to soothe and lighten his winter solitude—for he loved her; yes, he loved her, and he needed sympathy and companionship in all the best and highest instincts of his inner nature.

These Buriats, what were they? a miserable set of brutal savages; mere hard-working robbers and murderers, good enough for the practical rough work of every-day life (such as knocking Turcoman merchants on the head), but utterly incapable of appreciating or sympathising with the better tastes of civilised humanity. It was a hard calling, that of chieftain to these Tartar wretches, especially for a man of musical culture brought up in Paris, and he had hoped that Olga might have helped him through with it by her friendly companionship.

Not, of course, that he ever expected to be able to tell her the whole truth, women will be women; and coming to a rough country, they can't understand the necessities laid upon one for rough dealing. No, he could never have expected her to relish the full details of a borderer's profession, but he was vexed that she should already begin to suspect its nature on so very short an acquaintance. He had told her he was like a Highland chieftain of the old times, did she suppose that the Rob Roys and Roderick Dhus of real life used to treat their Lowland captives with rose-water and chivalry? After all, women have really no idea of how things must be managed in the stern realities of actual existence.

So the six weeks passed slowly away, and Olga waited and watched, with smiles on her lips, in mute terror.

At last, one day, in broad daylight, without a moment's warning, or a single premonitory symptom, Olga saw the courtyard suddenly filled with men in Russian uniforms, and a friend of hers, a major of infantry at Tobolsk, rushing in at the head of his soldiers upon the Tartar barrack.

In one second, as if by magic, the courtyard had changed into a roaring battlefield, the Cossacks were firing at the Tartars, and the Tartars were firing at the Cossacks. There was a din of guns and a smoke of gunpowder; and high above all, in the Buriat language, she heard the voice of Niaz, frantically encouraging his men to action, and shouting to them with wild energy in incomprehensible gutturals.

The surprise had been so complete that almost before Olga realised the situation the firing began to die away. The fort was carried, and Niaz and his men stood, disarmed and sullen, with bleeding faces, in the midst of a hastily-formed square of stout Cossacks, among the dead and dying strewn upon the ground.

Handsome as ever, but how she hated him!

His arm was wounded; and the Russian surgeon led him aside to bind it up. To Olga's amazement, while the surgeon was actually engaged in binding it, Niaz turned upon him like a savage dog, and bit his arm till the teeth met fiercely in the very middle. She shut her eyes, and half fainted with disgust and horror.

The surgeon shook him off, with an oath; and two Cossacks, coming up hastily, bound his hands behind his back, and tied his legs, quite regardless of his wounded condition.

Meanwhile, the Russian major had sought out Olga. "Madame la Baronne," he said respectfully, "I congratulate you upon your safety and your recovered freedom. Your father is with us; he will soon be here. Your letter reached him safely, in spite of its roundabout direction; and the Governor of Tobolsk despatched us at once upon this errand of release. Baron Niaz had long been suspected; your letter removed all doubts upon the subject."

A minute or two later, the Cossacks marched their prisoners out of the courtyard, two and two, into the great hall of the stronghold.

"I wish to bid farewell to my wife," Niaz cried to the major, in a loud voice. "I shall be sent to the mines, I suppose, and I shall never see her again in this world, most probably."

The major allowed him to come near, within speaking distance, under guard of two Cossacks.

"Madame la Baronne," he hissed out between his clenched teeth, "this is your hand. It was your hand that you gave me in marriage; it was your hand that wrote to betray me. Believe me, madame, come what may, your hand shall pay the penalty."

So much he said, passionately indeed, but with the offended dignity of a civilised being. Then the Tartar in him broke through the thin veneer of European culture, and he lolled his tongue out at her in savage derision, with a hideous menacing leer like an untamed barbarian. Till that moment, in spite of the horrible massacre she had seen with her own eyes, Olga had never suspected what profound depths of vulgar savagery lay unperceived beneath Alexander Niaz's handsome and aristocratic European features.

"March him away," cried the major in a stern voice. And they marched him away, still mocking with the other prisoners.

That was the last Olga Davidoff then saw of her Buriat husband.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER Niaz had been tried and condemned for robbery and murder, and sent, with the usual Russian clemency, to the mines of Oukboul, Olga Davidoff could not bear any longer to live at Tobolsk. It was partly terror, partly shame, partly pride; but Tobolsk or even St. Petersburg she felt to be henceforth utterly impossible for her.

So she determined to go back to her kinsfolk in that dear old quiet England, where there are no Nihilists, and no Tartars, and no exiles, and where everybody lived so placidly and demurely. She looked back now upon the Laurels, Clapham, as the ideal home of repose and happiness.

It was not at Clapham, however, that Madame Niaz (as she still called herself) settled down, but in a quiet little Kentish village where the London branch of the Davids family had retired to spend their Russian money.

Frank Davids, the son of the house, was Olga's second cousin; and when Olga had taken the pretty little rose-covered cottage at the end of the village, Frank Davids found few things more pleasant in life than to drop in of an afternoon and have a chat with his Russian kinswoman. Olga lived there alone with her companion, and in spite of the terrible scenes she had lately gone through, she was still a girl, very young, very attractive, and very pretty.

And Frank, too, was such a nice good fellow! Frank had heard from Madame Davidoff all her story (for madame had come over to see Olga fairly settled), and he pitied her for her sad romance in such a kind, brotherly fashion.

Once, and once only, Frank said a word to her that was not exactly brotherly. They were walking together down the footpath by the mill, and Olga had been talking to him about that great terror, when Frank asked her, in a quiet voice:

"Olga, why don't you try and get a divorce from that horrible Niaz?"

Olga looked at him in blank astonishment, and asked in return:

"Why, Frank, what would be the use of that? It would never blot out the memory of the past, or make that wretch any the less my wedded husband."

"But, Olga, you need a protector sorely. You need somebody to soothe and remove your lasting terror. And I think I know someone, Olga—I know someone who would give his whole life to save you, dearest, from a single day's fear or unhappiness."

Olga looked up at him like a startled child.

"Frank," she cried, "dear, dear Frank, you good cousin, never say again another word like that, or you will make me afraid to walk with you or talk with you any longer! You are the one friend I have whom I can trust and confide in; don't drive me away by talking to me of what is so impossible. I hate the man; I loathe and abhor him with all my heart; but I can never forget that he is still my husband. I have made my choice, and I must abide by it. Frank, Frank, promise me—promise me that you will never again speak upon the subject."

Frank's face grew saddened in a moment with a terrible sadness, but he said in a firm voice, "I promise," and he never broke his word from that day onward.

CHAPTER VI.

THREE years passed away quietly in the Kentish village, and every day Olga's unreasoning terror of Niaz grew gradually fainter and fainter. If she had known that Niaz had escaped from the mines, after eight months' imprisonment, and made his way by means of his Tartar friends across the passes to Tibet and Calcutta, she would not have allowed the sense of security to grow so strong upon her.

Meanwhile Frank, often in London, had picked up the acquaintance of a certain M. de Vouillemont, a French gentleman much about at the clubs, of whose delightful manners and wide acquaintance with the world and men he was never tired of talking to Olga. "A most charming man, indeed, De Vouillemont, and very anxious to come down here and see Hazelhurst. Besides, Olga, he has been even in Russia, and he knows how to talk admirably about everybody and everything. I've asked him down for Friday evening. Now, do, like a good girl, break your rule for once, and come and dine with us, although there's to be a stranger. It's only one, you know, and the girls would be so delighted if you'd help entertain him, for he speaks hardly any English, and their French, poor things, is horribly insular and boarding-schooly."

At last, with much reluctance, Olga consented, and on the Friday she went up to the big house at eight punctually.

Mrs. Davids and the girls were not yet in the drawing-room when she arrived, but M. de Vouillemont had dressed early and was waiting with his back to the door, looking intently at some pictures on the wall, as Olga entered.

As she came in, and the servant shut the door behind her, the stranger turned slowly. In a moment she recognised him. His complexion was disguised, so as to make him look darker than before; his black moustache was shaved off; his hair was differently cut and dressed; but still, as he looked her in the face, she knew him at once. It was Alexander Niaz!

Petrified with fear, she could neither fly nor scream. She stood still in the middle of the drawing-room, and stared at him fixedly in an agony of terror.

Niaz had evidently tracked her down, and came prepared for his horrid revenge. Without a moment's delay, his face underwent a hideous change, and from the cultivated European gentleman in evening clothes that he looked when she entered, he was transformed as if by magic into a grinning, gibbering, Tartar savage, with his tongue lolling out once more, as of old in Siberia, in hateful derision of her speechless terror.

Seizing her roughly by the arm, he dragged her after him, not so much unresisting as rigid with horror, to the open fireplace. A marble fender ran round the tiled hearth. Laying her down as if she were dead, he placed her small right hand with savage glee upon that ready-made block, and then proceeded deliberately to take out a small steel hatchet from inside his evening coat.

Olga was too terrified even to withdraw her hand. He raised the axe on high—it flashed a second in the air—a smart throb of pain—a dreadful crunching of bone and sinew—and Olga's hand fell white and lifeless upon the tiled hearthplace. Without stopping to look at her for a moment, he took it up brutally in his own, and flung it with a horrible oath into the blazing fire.

At that moment the door opened, and Frank entered.

Olga, lying faint and bleeding on the hearthrug, was just able to look up at him imploringly, and utter in a sharp cry of alarm the one word "Niaz."

Frank sprang upon him like an angry lion.

"I told her her hand should pay the penalty," the Tartar cried, with a horrible joy bursting wildly from his livid features; "and now it burns in the fire over yonder, as she herself shall burn next minute for ever and ever in fire and brimstone."

As he spoke he drew a pistol from his pocket, and pointed it at her with his finger on the trigger.

Next moment, before he could fire, Frank had seized his hand, flung the pistol to the farther end of the drawing-room, and forced the Tartar down upon the floor in a terrible life and death struggle.

Niaz's face already livid, grew purpler and purpler as they wrestled with one another on the carpet in that deadly effort. His wrath and vindictiveness gave a mad energy to his limbs and muscles. Should he be baulked of his fair revenge at last? Should the woman who had betrayed him escape scot free with just the loss of a hand, and he himself merely exchange a Siberian for an English prison? No, no, never! by St. Nicholas, never! Ha, madame! I will murder you both! The pistol! the pistol! Let me go! I will kill you yet! I will kill you! I will kill you!

Then he gasped, and grew blacker and purpler—blacker and purpler—blacker—ever blacker. Presently he gasped again, and Frank's hand was now upon his mumbling throat. They rolled over and over in their frantic struggles. Then a long, slow inspiration. After that his muscles relaxed. Frank loosed him a little, but knelt upon his breast heavily still, lest he should rise again in another paroxysm. But no; he lay quite motionless—quite motionless, and never stirred a single finger.

Frank felt his heart—no movement; his pulse—quite quiet; his lips—not a breath perceptible! Then he rose, faint and staggering, and rang for the servants.

When the doctor came hurriedly from the village to bandage up the Russian lady's arm, he immediately pronounced that M. de Vouillemont was dead—stone dead—not a doubt about it. Probably apoplexy, under stress of violent emotion.

The inquest was a good deal hushed up, owing to the exceedingly painful circumstances of the case; and to this day very few people about Torquay (where she now lives) know how Mrs. Frank Davids, the quiet lady who dresses herself always in black, and has such a beautiful softened half-frightened expression, came to lose her right hand. But everybody knows that Mr. Davids is tenderness itself to her, and that she loves him in return with the most absolute and childlike devotion.

It was worth while cutting off her right hand, after all, to be rid of that awful spectre of Niaz, and to have gained the peaceful love of Frank Davids.

Another Story by Grant Allen next week.

HE was a daring aeronaut,
And had a fine balloon;
He'd put his wealth all in it
And hoped to go up soon.
The day came—it was missing,
His grief none could relieve,
His wife had gone and used it
For the pattern of a sleeve.

PROBABLY YOUR LAST CHANCE.

The Extra Christmas Number of *Pearson's Weekly*, which was published last Wednesday, is rapidly selling out, so that if you do not wish to be disappointed, as thousands were last year, you should not fail to make your purchase at once.

The number consists of Thirty-two Pages of Stories and Seasonable Articles, and is profusely illustrated by FRED BARNARD and other well-known artists.

PRICE THREEPENCE, with a Coloured Plate which kind friends tell me is the best published this season.

"By the Blue Alsatian Mountains" they don't keep "P.W.," at least, not in stock. They'll get it for you, though, as they will in any other odd corner of the earth, if you ask them.

QUESTIONS WORTH ANSWERING.

REPLIES.

1706. Which is the Worst Language for Making Puns in?

In the Chinese language all the words are monosyllables. But each monosyllable may have as many as a dozen distinct meanings. To distinguish these the words are uttered in different "tones," each word varying or changing in pitch according to its significance. In speaking a monosyllable the pitch is set either high or low, and is kept constant, or raised or sunk, even as much as a semitone. The result is that the Chinese detect differences of "tone" more readily than variations in the vowel-sounds. In addition, when a monosyllable pronounced in a certain manner has more than one meaning, certain qualifying articles (classifiers) are used with these words to distinguish them. Hence it comes that all Chinese puns depend on a confusion between two different vowels in monosyllabic words. So the puns are invariably bad, and never attain to the refined atrocity so commended by Lamb.

1709. Can the Revolution of the Earth on its Axis be Demonstrated by Actual Experiment?

Yes, and in more ways than one. The best known experiment is the celebrated pendulum experiment invented by Foucault. A heavy weight suspended by a fine wire from the roof of the Pantheon was set swinging in a plane from north to south. A fine point under the weight traced the path of each swing in sand. The paths were not straight lines, but curves, and they verged continually eastward and westward with regard to the building. As the building had not moved, save with the earth, only the earth's motion could have caused the diversion of the pendulum. 2. A weight dropped in a still atmosphere from a high tower always falls to the east of the vertical. This is because the top of the tower is moving faster than the bottom. In both these experiments the actual variation corresponds with the conditions of the theory that the earth revolves on its axis once in twenty-four hours. 3. The gyroscope is a heavy disc so hung that it can turn with freedom in any direction. The disc when started rapidly rotating in such a position that its edge points to a certain star will continue to point to that star while it rotates, though it alters its position with regard to objects on the earth. If the star revolved round the earth the reverse would happen. 4. If a china bowl be nearly filled with water, and a very thin disc of cork with a black line drawn across it, be floated on it so that the line on the disc corresponds with another line drawn on the floor of a room so situated as not to be subject to vibrations, the disc will slowly swing round from east to west—*i.e.*, in a contrary direction to the revolution of the earth. It never moves from west to east, and only the revolution of the earth could make it move as it does.

1711. How is the Cauliflower Produced from the Cabbage?

By a process of artificial selection. According to Mr. Darwin, the flowers of the cauliflower do not differ from those of the wild cabbage, but they occur in vast numbers, and are packed very closely together, so as to present the appearance of a dense mass of whitish succulent matter. In producing the cauliflower all that was necessary was to enormously increase the number of the flowers. Those cabbages which possessed more flowers than usual were selected for propagation. The plants grown from their seed would be likely to contain a small proportion of cabbages with still more numerous flowers. Seedlings would be raised from these, and the process of selection would be continued for centuries, till the monstrous flower-heads of the cauliflower were brought into existence. The change produced in a few years would be very slight; but, by accumulating very small variations through many generations, very important transformations are caused. As all the chief kinds of cabbage existed at least as early as the sixteenth century, it is evident that gardeners in the olden time well understood their business.

1710. Which Substance Crystallises in the Greatest Number of Forms?

The aqueous vapour in the atmosphere. This does not like rain crystallise into hail or sleet, but forms the most beautiful crystals, the aggregation of which forms snow. More than one thousand different forms of these crystals have been sketched and photographed, and they have been classified into five distinct groups. The crystals in one of the groups are only formed when the atmosphere is charged with electricity. The size of the crystals varies from about an inch to one-tenth of an inch in diameter, the size being smaller the lower the temperature, but isolated crystals occasionally fall in calm, cold weather. Each snow shower generally consists of crystals of one class only.

1712. Which Existing Coin has Retained its "Image and Superscription" for the Longest Time?

As it is the invariable custom in civilised countries to stamp the profile of the reigning monarch or other ruler on the coinage, the latter, of course, changes with every reign or presidency. To this rule, however, there is one exception, and in this the answer to the question is to be found. When Maria Theresa, Empress of Austria, died in 1780, after having earned from her people the title, "Mother of her country," it was determined to continue the coinage of the thaler or dollar bearing her image and superscription as a memorial of her. This coin is still issued from the Imperial Mint exactly as it was coined a hundred and thirteen years ago.

1713. Why do most White Furred Animals have either Pink or very Light-coloured Eyes?

Hair, fur, skin, and the iris of the eye vary in colour according to the amount of pigment developed in their structure. The chemical constitution of this pigment has not been accurately determined, but two conditions are necessary to its formations—sunlight, and a special function of the trophic nerves. Albinos are animals which have lost the pigment-forming function of the trophic nervous system. In them the skin is waxy pink, the hair white or flaxen, the iris pale pink. The colour of the eye is always affected by the same causes which determine the colour of the hair or fur.

1714. Which Scientific Discovery has Caused the Greatest Panic in the Commercial World?

The discovery of how to extract sugar from beetroot economically caused the greatest panic in the commercial world. After events showed that the panic was justified. Sugar, in 1850, was eightpence a pound, and can now be got for twopence a pound. The sugar refining industries were almost stopped, a disaster which affected Greenock especially, and the value of cane plantations was enormously depreciated. Last century, Arkwright's spinning-frame created a panic amongst the cotton-spinners of Lancashire, but the panic, though leading to riots and the expulsion of Arkwright from Lancashire, was more due to popular ignorance and prejudice than to any real diminution in the demand for labour caused by the mechanical improvements.

1715. Do any Plants Necessarily Live their Lives in at Least Two Different Situations?

Yes, there are at least two plants which come under this curious necessity. One is the *Protoccus pulvialis*, a one-celled water-plant. In the first stage of its existence it is furnished with two oar-like processes which it uses to propel itself from place to place. In the second stage the processes disappear, the outer shell hardens, and the plant spends the rest of its life at rest. The second case is that of the fungus *Æcidium berberidis*, which spends its early life on the leaves of the barberry, but cannot come to maturity till it leaves the barberry and finds its way to growing wheat. So great is the damage done to the latter by the invasion of the fungus that the United States Government has passed an Act forbidding the planting of barberry trees within a given distance of cornlands.

1716. Is there any Modern Country in which the Sale of Beef is Illegal?

In accordance with an ancient law, the sale of beef is illegal in China. In spite of this fact, beef is eaten by all the Chinese who can afford it, and when a gratuity is given to a man it is generally accompanied by the phrase, "Here is something for tea and beef for you." Chinese butchers are liable to have their meat stolen at any time, and for this reason they are usually men sufficiently powerful, physically speaking, to protect their wares themselves, or they employ hired bullies to do so for them.

1717. What is the Historical Origin of the apparently Meaningless Cries of our Sailors—"Ahoy!" "Yo-ho!"

"Ahoy," or "Aoi," as quoted in old MSS. and the "Song of Roland," was the war-cry of the Norse and Danish vikings when they rushed their war galleys against the foe. It survives as a sailor's call of warning and encouragement. "Yo-ho" is probably a corruption of the Danish "aa-saa" as they pulled at their sweeps when urging the galleys up creeks and river-mouths on their plundering forays.

1718. How did Property Stolen in a Piratical Raid come to be called "Loot"?

The word has two origins, which are probably allied. There is a Sanskrit word "lôtra," meaning plunder, and from this comes the Hindoo "lut" (booty). The Romany or gipsy language also has "luter," of identical meaning. The hypothesis which accords an Eastern origin to the gipsies would account for the identity of the words. It may also be noted that the common Indian name for predatory tribes is "looties." Wellington used this word in his despatches from India, but the word "loot" does not seem to have been well known in this country prior to the Indian Mutiny.

1719. Is there any Affection of the Ear Corresponding to Colour Blindness in the Eye?

Mr. Grant Allen, writing in "Mind," says: "There is an auditory abnormality somewhat akin to colour blindness. Upon this I venture to bestow the name 'note-deafness.'" He gives an account of experiments on a person afflicted in this way, who could perceive no difference between the sounds of two adjacent notes on the piano, though when the notes were far apart, as at an octave, he could perceive a difference. He could not perceive that a discord was unpleasant. In other respects his hearing was unusually acute. In some persons a note is heard as of different pitch by the right and left ears respectively. Some persons, again, hear distinctly shrill notes which others cannot perceive. This can be tested by a very ingenious instrument called Galton's whistle. Sir John Herschel writes: "Nothing can be more surprising than to see two persons, neither of them deaf, the one complaining of the penetrating shrillness of a sound, while the other maintains there is no sound at all." Some persons with a sensitive ear for low sounds cannot distinguish the squeak of a bat, the sound of a cricket, or even the chirp of a sparrow. Wollaston remarked in a friend of his that the hearing terminated suddenly at a note four octaves above the middle of the piano.

1720. Which Poor Soil is Improved by Planting it with Trees?

Nearly all soils save the richest are improved by tree-planting, but the benefit is particularly noticeable in the two extreme cases of marshy soil that wants draining and stiff clayey land which does not absorb enough moisture. In the first case the surface-drainage is greatly assisted, and in the second the stiff soil is broken up and made pervious by the roots of the trees. Again, where the surface-soil is poor, trees enrich it with the mineral products they obtain from the subsoil, and which they give to the upper soil, together with organic compounds derived from the air, when their leaves fall. Lastly, trees properly disposed will largely increase the fertility of some lands by sheltering them from winds too parching or too moist, as the case may be.

CONDITIONS.

We shall be glad to receive replies to any of the questions asked here from our readers. Each reply must bear the writer's name and address. We shall print the best reply to each question, and shall pay for all matter printed at our ordinary rate of two guineas a column. The same reader may send replies to any number of queries. Envelopes should be marked "Replies," in the top left-hand corner, and answers to the questions in any issue of the paper must reach us by first post on the Tuesday of the week following that for which the paper is dated. Payment will only be made for replies published. Authorities on which replies are based must be given. Half-a-crown will be paid on publication for every question received which is considered worthy of insertion.

QUESTIONS.

1741. Which of our colonies will probably prove the most formidable rival to the mother country in the future?

1742. Why are the birds indigenous to islands usually so conspicuous in colour?

1743. Is there any inaccessible region in the world outside the Arctic and Antarctic regions?

1744. Why is the prisoner's place in a criminal court called the dock?

1745. Why has no wild animal a curly tail?

1746. Which is the most striking instance of the truth of the saying "The madness of one age is the wisdom of the next"?

1747. Would it be possible for a colt to inherit characteristics from a stallion other than its own sire?

1748. Do animals ever faint?

1749. (*Re* Reply 1703). Which foreign law has proved most beneficial to British commerce?

1750. Which weapon now in use has least changed since its invention?

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Why send a meaningless Christmas card to a friend when one of our Xmas numbers will answer the same purpose ever so much better?

ALWAYS A LITTLE LATE.

I'M always a little late wherever I may go,
In whatso'er I undertake I always find it so.
I'd get on very nicely, if the world would only wait,
But now I'm sure to find myself a little bit too late.

When but a child I always went a little late for school;
In making love the same delay my actions seem to rule.
For every time I asked a maid to be my loving mate
She'd say, "I'm sorry, very; you're a little bit too late."

I can't recall a time when I set out to catch a train
But what I had to run for it with all my might and main,
And as I saw it gliding out was forced to sadly wait
The while someone would mention, "You're a little bit too late."

I half believe if I should die—as certainly I shall—
I'd be a little bit too late to see my funeral.
Someone would say, "The hearse is gone, the mourners wouldn't wait,
The coffin went without you, you're a little bit too late."

MIND YOUR EYES.

DURING a recent visit to a thieves' lodging-house in the East-end a retired "hand" gave a *P. W.* representative some details regarding the tricks practised by small thieves—men who do not go in for big hauls.

It appears that the garrotter and street bully have dispensed with the use of the revolver, having provided themselves with a substitute which is far more efficient. This is a powder consisting of the refuse tobacco taken from the bottom of the bowl of a tobacco pipe, an equal quantity of salt, and half of cayenne pepper.

A pinch of this mixture thrown into the eyes will blind a man for at least six hours, and leave the garrotter absolutely free to rifle the pockets of his victim. I am told that this trick is likely to be extensively practised during the coming winter.

EFFECTUAL EVICTION.

To the stranger just landed on any part of the Brazilian coast, the oddest feature in connection with the houses is the total absence of verandahs of any sort or kind, and the very marked presence of red-tiled sloping roofs.

These roofs are universal. They are easily put on, easily repaired, and easily taken off, whilst they afford the best shelter possible against the tropical downpours of rain that are common to that part of the world.

It is a law in Brazil that a tenant who refuses to pay his rent cannot be forcibly evicted. This at first was a source of great annoyance to landlords with unruly tenants, but the difficulty was overcome by the aid of a little stratagem.

When it became necessary to turn out a family whose payments were irregular or nil, the landlord usually found it essential to repair the roof of the house occupied by the people in question, and for this purpose he would take it off and cart it away. In nine cases out of ten, a terrific downpour of rain would visit the spot within a few days, and this generally had the effect of practically washing the refractory family out of their domicile.

"LET THE RIGHT HAND BE STRUCK OFF."

THE days when an offender against the laws of this country was liable to torture of every kind at the hands of his judges have long since been added to the past.

It may safely be said that not one person in a hundred thousand knows that there is an offence for which the only punishment is still amputation. Any striking or other outrage, in the superior Courts of Justice, or at the assizes, is highly penal, and is punishable with the loss of the right hand, imprisonment for life, and forfeiture of goods and chattels and of the entire profits of the offender's land during his lifetime.

It is immaterial whether blood is drawn or not, the punishment is the same. And a like fate awaits those who assault a judge sitting in the Court by drawing a weapon, even if no blow is struck.

By the ancient common law before the Conquest such an offence was punishable by loss of life, and to this day the law has retained so much of its ancient severity as only to exchange the loss of life for loss of the offending limb.

It is remarkable that this relic of our ancient system should still remain in force while others of the same nature have been abolished or modified. In 1799 Lord Thanet and others were prosecuted for riot at the trial of Arthur O'Connor, and the question arose whether the Court was not bound to pronounce the judgment of amputation of the right hand, etc. However, it seems the attorney-general entered a *nolle prosequi*, and so they escaped.

HOW GOODS TRAINS ARE MANAGED.

IT is a source of wonderment to most people how the goods traffic of a great railway is managed, and how accidents are avoided when there are expresses and slow goods trains on the same line.

There are 20,000 miles of railroads in this country, and the combined capitals of the companies reach the stupendous figure of 944 millions, or 270 millions more than the National Debt. The number of goods trains which have to be run in order to pay dividends on this sum almost defies calculation.

The London and North-Western Railway Company, with whose manager a *P. W.* representative had an interview the other day, are the owners of 55,123 goods waggons alone, and these trucks during the latter half of last year ran no fewer than 9,606,086 miles, carrying 17,382,906 tons of merchandise.

The greater part of the goods traffic is conducted after dark, between twenty and twenty-five heavily laden trains leaving Euston every night. Some idea will thus be gained of the despatch required, and the regularity which must be maintained to keep the lines in working order.

As a matter of fact a goods train consisting of forty waggons can be loaded in the almost incredible time of ten minutes, and the trains are despatched at intervals of a quarter of an hour. Indeed, the whole work is carried out with so much rapidity that fifty tons of goods may be lying in a merchant's office in London at five o'clock of an afternoon, and yet be in Carlisle—three hundred miles distant—by noon the next day.

The trucks are arranged in order according to the towns for which they are loaded. Thus, in a train running to Carlisle the Carlisle trucks are placed nearest the engine; then follow the Preston waggons; after these come those for Manchester, until we reach the waggons containing freight for towns nearest home. In this way trucks are merely dropped, and the train is never broken.

The make-up of a goods train necessitates no little skill. In the sheds a certain space is set apart for towns for which freight has been booked. As soon as a truck is loaded, it is conveyed to another set of rails by means of capstans worked by hydraulic pressure, each one being placed in its proper order. The tedious method of shunting by engines is, for the most part, done away with.

Goods trains rarely consist of more than forty waggons, for with a train longer than this there is difficulty in finding sidings spacious enough to get into to allow a fast passenger train to pass.

The trains are divided into three classes—express, fast, and slow—the engines of each exhibiting different lights at night and boards by day, so that the signalmen on the road may know when to turn them into sidings to meet the exigencies of passenger traffic. The average speed of an express goods is twenty-four miles an hour, a rate about equal to the passenger expresses on certain other lines, as travellers in the south-east of England may know. Every fifty miles or so the trains are brought to a standstill, in order that the wheels of the waggons may be examined.

One point deserving of special mention is the hours worked by the men. On the London and North-Western Railway the employees are forbidden to serve more than twelve hours out of every twenty-four. In the event of a brakesman, driver, or stoker engaged in goods traffic being so much delayed by fog or other circumstances that his twelve hours' duty are almost up, it is his place to calculate at what station his hours of daily service will have expired; having done this, he must throw out a note at the next signal-box, and the man in charge will telegraph to the station indicated for the provision of a relief-man.

MAMMA: "Gracious, child! don't carry the cat by the tail!"

Little Edith: "But, mamma, if I carry her by one arm like you do me, she tries to bite me."

WIFE (displaying her new bonnet): "This is the very latest fashion, John."

Husband (sighing): "I wish it were, but I know it isn't. There'll be another one out next month."

"YOU sketch with a free hand," remarked the professor, who had been critically examining her portfolio.

"Entirely free," said the lady, as she cast her eyes in soft confusion, and waited for the professor to follow up the opening.

GETTING EVEN WITH THEM.—Nurse (to little Frank with catapult): "Don't you know it's wicked to shoot the dear little birds, Frank? They never harm you."

Frank: "Don't zey. Ev'y time I ask mamma what she's spankin' me for, an' who told her, she says it was a little bird."

ANOTHER INSURANCE CLAIM PAID.

MR. W. HARRIS, 1, Park Place, Brynmill, Swansea. Arm broken. Football. November 4th.

The above had a signed coupon at the time of accident, and the Ocean Company have forwarded to him a cheque for £5.

HOW TO REFUSE.

TRUE kindness of heart is shown not in the giving, but in the manner of giving or refusing, of which the following, overheard the other day, is a good illustration.

A stout gentleman, who had both his arms filled with parcels, was followed by a woman and her two children, begging vehemently.

"Don't you see," he cried irritably, "that I cannot get at my pockets? If I wanted to give you anything I couldn't do it."

Then, after a pause, he added more kindly: "But you needn't be disappointed, because if I could give you anything I shouldn't want to."

THE MUSIC-HALL SONG.

THE life of a music-hall song may be reckoned at anything between three minutes and four years, and the curious part of it is that, as a rule, the greater the popularity a song acquires the shorter is its lease of public life.

A moderately popular song may be warbled night after night without complaint, but the song which reaches the street rarely lives longer than eighteen months. The enemy of the public singer is the man in the street; it is he who kills the ditties that command favour, for as soon as a song becomes so well known that men who reel home of a night cannot refrain from giving vent to it, its fate is sealed.

If a song only invoked enthusiasm in the halls, it is calculated that its life would be doubled, and it is a strange circumstance that while the music-hall singer rejoices when his ditty is taken up by the barrel-organs because it brings him momentary fame, he is robbed of a lot of money by street musicians and brawlers.

Fame wrecks the life of nearly all songs, so far as the singer is concerned. The song "After the Ball" is said to have brought its publishers £10,000; it is estimated that a million copies of "Marguerite" have been disposed of, while the sale of "Daddy wouldn't Buy Me a Bow-wow" has exceeded fifty thousand copies. In face of these remarkable figures it is easily seen how quickly popular songs are driven from the stage.

A song in the height of its popularity will bring an artiste as much as £70 a week, but as soon as the Italian grinder seizes it the singer has to drop it and a good portion of the £70 as well.

Just now music-hall singers are lamenting the dearth of good songs; one even offers £50 for a good ditty, but even this one, if it is forthcoming, must ultimately share the fate of the others. There is only one town in which the singing of music-hall songs in the streets is prohibited. That is Southampton, and the prohibition extends only to Sunday. Policemen there have instructions to stop everyone singing in public thoroughfares on the Sabbath.

SEEKING NOTORIETY.

THE late French historian, M. Taine, is said to have had a violent abhorrence of the publicity which his fame brought upon him. No curious strangers found their way across his threshold.

He has contrived to defend the privacy of his home, even after death. By his will his heirs and descendants are forbidden to publish any letter, paper, or information touching his private life. The diary which he had kept for years he himself burned shortly before his death, to make sure that it would never be given to the public.

An odd contrast to this reticence was the eagerness of Lord Byron to pose before the public. Not only his thoughts, his personal habits, his misfortunes, his agony, his vices, and his remorse for them, were all dragged out by him for the world to talk and wonder at.

Some of the noblest men of genius, Shakespeare, Richter, Lamb, and Emerson, were apparently indifferent to fame, and never made an effort to attitudinise before the public.

But the great majority of artists and authors have been nervously sensitive to the opinion of the world, and have willingly allowed the curtain to be drawn from their private lives.

Alfred de Musset, going into the theatre, once saw a well-dressed man eagerly pick up the cigarette he had thrown away and put it in his pocket-book as a valued relic. De Musset grasped his companion's arm, exclaiming ecstatically:

"Did you see? Now I know that I am famous!"

"And Alfred," sneered his friend, "went on scattering cigarettes nightly, in hopes that he might see an admirer pick them up!"

Reporters are censured for their exposure of personal habits and peculiarities, but we must remember that if a curious public did not show delight in these personal details, newspapers would not publish them.

The man of genius who writes or paints makes a friend of the public. If he is sensible and modest, it is for the unknown, comprehending eye and ear behind the crowd that he works and speaks. And with such a man it is only to that nameless friend that he bares his private life.

But what apology can be made for the countless men and women without genius who daily seek a vulgar notoriety? Certainly Taine's noble modesty has no meaning for them.

"Put me in my little bed," and cover up my little head; but don't omit to read to me the poem on page 23 of PEARSON'S CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

SOMETHING NEW AND STRANGE.

A GAME of chess was played by telephone, the other day, in two French towns thirty miles apart, and lasted for four hours.

LITERARY bracelets are becoming a craze among the fair portion of Parisian Society. They consist of a number of tiny gold books, chained together, each one being enamelled with the name of some favourite author.

A VOLCANIC tree has recently been discovered in the Japanese village of Ono, in the province of Yechigo. It is sixty feet high, and every evening after sunset a large quantity of thick white smoke issues from its summit.

AN ODD instrument has been invented which is at once a fan and an ear-trumpet. To use it as the latter, the deaf lady rolls up the square yard of silk and fluff, puts the nozzle to her ear, and listens to what the speaker has got to say at the other end.

IN Paris a "Society for the Protection of Lobsters" has been formed. Its mission is to run a tilt with restaurant keepers who are in the habit of supplying their customers with a delectable dish known as "homard à l'Americaine," and in preparing which the crustacean is cut up while still alive.

AN Austrian lady, with a weakness for attending army manœuvres, has built herself a glass carriage so that she may observe parades, marches past, and other military functions in any sort of weather. Every part of the vehicle is made of glass with the exception of the upholstering, the springs, and the tyres.

IN the Baltimore female house of detention all the doors of the cells are locked by electricity under control of the matron, who may, in the case of fire, release every bolt in the building and save the prisoners from the chance of getting burned alive by simply turning a switch. But it will be a bad day for the authorities when an inmate doing her time gets hold of that switch.

ABSOLUTELY the highest meteorological station has just been completed at Charchani, near Arequipa, Peru. The building is 16,650 feet above sea level, or about 2,150 feet higher than that from which observations are taken on Mont Blanc. No one lives there, but it is furnished with self-recording aneroids and thermometers, which are visited and attended to at certain periods of the year.

A NOVEL way of smuggling has just been brought to light by the French authorities on the Franco-Swiss frontier. It has been discovered that about twenty-two thousand watches, valued at two million francs, have entered France in the space of six months without having paid duty. A great portion of these were discovered packed in tins of condensed milk, from which, of course, the milk had been taken out and the tins then carefully closed up again.

AN ingenious construction of cycle and other wheels has been invented in which a spring arrangement is used instead of the ordinary spokes. A number of rods are attached to the rim of the wheel by hinges to allow them to move slightly to one side. These rods project into small cylinders pivoted to the hub of the wheel, containing strong spiral springs connected to the rods and to the bottom of the cylinders, so that the springs at the lower side of the wheel are compressed and those at the top extended. Vibration caused by roughness of the road will thus be prevented from reaching the rider.

YOU have probably at some time or other had occasion to lash a parcel or bundle of papers to your handbag or portmanteau with a length of twine, and wondered why some ingenious inventor has never produced something in the shape of a holder that would be at once simple to manipulate and inoffensive to look upon. Well, a certain Mr. Quinlan has at last filled the blank by giving to the world his patent handbag attachment through the agency of Messrs. Whitehouse, Cox, and Hartley, of Crown Works, Walsall, who are willing to send this article along for sixpence, post-free, larger ones a shilling and eighteenpence. It is a buckleless strap, with a couple of clips that fasten on to the rings of the bag handle.

WHEN a bus is going along in full swing the power exerted by the horses is a mere bagatelle compared with that wanted to get up the initial impetus. Lots of appliances have been invented to give the poor horses a helping hand in this respect, but they have almost all of them turned out more or less pronounced failures. I went the other day to have a look at one which promises well. It is at once a stopping and a starting arrangement. There is a brass cylinder working an oblong iron framework toothed on its upper and lower inner edges. Round the hub of one of the after wheels is a cog. By pressing a lever with his foot when the bus is in motion the driver brings the lower set of teeth in contact with the cog, which draws the piston down the cylinder, thereby creating a vacuum. When the cog reaches the end of the iron toothed frame it locks the wheel and stops the bus. To operate the starting mechanism the lever is simply released. The upper set of teeth is then brought into contact with the cog, and, being drawn in by the vacuum, actuates the wheel and turns it forward. The cylinder is sufficiently powerful to move a fully loaded bus over a distance of ten or twelve feet. Mr. Walter Hill, of 248, Oxford Street, London, W., is the benefactor of the hard-worked bus horse.

Under the above heading we publish accounts of new and curious inventions and discoveries. Should any readers have something exceptional of the kind which they would like to communicate to the world at large, we shall be very glad if they will make this the medium for doing so.

If any reader of PEARSON'S WEEKLY *wishes to communicate with an expert regarding an idea for a patent let him write to the Editor of this paper, marking the envelope* PATENT. *The letter will be handed to a gentleman well known in connection with patents, who will put himself in communication with its sender.*

ALL SORTS AND CONDITIONS OF MEN.

THE Duke of Edinburgh can speak seven modern languages.

MR. MUNDELLA is an English Jew, the son of an Italian refugee.

I hear that the Princess of Wales never carries any money about with her. Quite a number of people seem to have this peculiarity.

IT is said that a red flower in Mr. Gladstone's buttonhole is a danger signal to the Opposition. It is a sign that he intends to make a considerable oratorical effort.

THE "Village Blacksmith," whose praises were sung by Longfellow, is still alive, although the smithy under the spreading chestnut tree knows him no more. His home is at Medford, in Massachusetts, U.S.A.

MR. HENRY READER WILLIAMS is one of the best known men in the City of London. He has devoted an enormous amount of his time and energy to obtaining breathing spaces in the north of London, and it is due to his efforts that the beautiful Highgate Woods were thrown open to the public. The Priory at the foot of Muswell Hill is his home, and a beautiful home it is.

DR. W. H. DALLINGER, F.R.S., is famous as a lecturer all the world over. He began life as a Wesleyan minister, but he afterwards gave up his clerical duties so as to devote his whole time to minute biological research. He built himself a microscopical laboratory near London, and he knows more of the private affairs of spiders and other insignificant forms of life than anyone in the world.

WOMEN do so many things nowadays for a living that it is not surprising to hear there is a professional lady photographer—Miss Alice Hughes. Such a charming lady she is too, and very pretty. Her father was an artist, and in order to photograph his paintings she first studied photography. There is scarcely a beauty in England to whom Miss Hughes' camera has not taken off its cap.

MR. F. MARION CRAWFORD, the novelist, who is so popular on both sides of the Atlantic, is a special favourite at the Vatican. On one occasion he delivered a powerful speech before the Catholic Union of Boston, U.S.A., in favour of Papacy, which so moved the Pope that he directed a telegram to be sent to the novelist with his blessing, and inquiring when he might be expected again in Rome.

THE first Baron Hirsch obtained his title from the King of Bavaria, a monarch who, in moments of hard-uppishness, he constantly obliged. When he died he left £3,000,000 for his son. The present Baron has more than doubled this fortune by lending his millions to impecunious countries at a vast rate of interest. Over and above this, he married a lady with a fortune of £600,000 in her own right.

IT is not generally known that Mr. Gladstone has royal blood in his veins, and is proud of the fact. He claims that Henry III. of England and Robert Bruce were both his ancestors. In the line of succession was Lady Jane Beaufort, who first married James I. of Scotland, and after his assassination, Sir James Stuart. From them was descended that charming lady, Ann Robertson, the Premier's mother.

MOST of her Majesty's judges are not brisk in their movements, but Mr. Justice Kennedy is. He does not believe in that kind of dignity which is conferred by elephantine deliberateness. He always walks as if he had been sent for and wanted to get back in a hurry. One old-time custom of London barristers he observes with great tenacity, the daily powdering and curling of his wig. He is blessed with a keen sense of humour, and is never at a loss for repartee.

LORD HARRIS is doing all he can to promote the cause of football in India. The natives seem to have taken up the game with no little enthusiasm, and it is said they somehow manage to play without boots. If some of the gentlemen who propel the leather in this country were to follow their example once or twice, there would be considerably less hacking in the football field. After a player has smashed his toes against an opponent's shins, he would cease to be reckless.

Now that Sir Andrew Clark has passed away, Dr. Francis Henry Laking, though not yet fifty, makes a larger income from his profession than any other physician—probably in the world. He was a student at St. George's Hospital, the crack medical school in London, and graduated M.D. at Heidelberg in 1869. Soon after this he settled down in Pall Mall, not far from Marlborough House, and it was not long before he was called in as family doctor to the Prince of Wales. This stroke of luck ensured his popularity. He is now Surgeon-Apothecary to the Queen, a post worth a thousand a year, and he is besides surgeon to the Prince of Wales, and the Dukes, his brothers. Dr. Laking's very presence inspires a patient with confidence, and he has worked innumerable faith cures.

WHAT is Mr. William Waldorf Astor, millionaire and newspaper proprietor, doing in England? One often hears this question asked, and the answer nobody seems to know. It is very simple. Not long ago there was what is commonly termed a row between Mrs. William Waldorf Astor and Mrs. William Astor, widow of the late millionaire.

The question was, who was entitled to claim the letters which arrived at the Post-office addressed to Mrs. Astor? The dowager Mrs. Astor won the day, and Mrs. William Waldorf determined she would no longer adorn a society which failed to yield to her that primacy which as the wife of the head of the House of Astor she considered her due. And so she brought her husband over here, and is determined to stay away until the cause of her annoyance is removed.

Since Mr. Astor has been in London a great many bogus telegrams concerning him have been sent to America without any apparent cause, and by some unknown hand. On the strength of one of these, the poor misguided NEW YORK WORLD recently published a page of obituary reflections, and a most touching and complete description of the death scene.

FOOTBALL NOTES.

I DARESAY the readers of this column will be glad of an opportunity of comparing the American game of football with the games played over here. I was astonished to find that football is quite as much the national game of America as it is of Great Britain. It has altogether displaced baseball in public favour, and the big football matches in the States attract far bigger crowds than ours ever do. I was informed that it was no unusual thing for 40,000 or 50,000 people to collect to see a match between prominent teams.

I saw a match between two universities, Cornell and Princeton, which would be as nearly the equivalent to one between our Oxford and Cambridge Universities as anything in this country to which one can compare it. I was told that the game was a very poor specimen, and I cannot help thinking this must have been the case, as a slower, for both player and onlooker, I never saw. The American rules are founded upon those of our Rugby Union, with one or two important differences. There are eleven players on a side, seven of whom are what we should call forwards, while there is one half-back and three full-backs. Each time the game is started the seven forwards line up facing one another, while the half-back of each side is about three yards behind them, and the full backs about five yards farther back again. The services of goal-keepers or full backs placed as ours are in Rugby Union are altogether dispensed with.

The centre player of the seven forwards stands with his legs apart and the ball between them, and, bending down, places his hands upon the ball. He then throws it backwards between his legs to the half-back, who either runs with it himself or passes it to one of the full-backs. After this, the game proceeds very much as in Rugby Union, but every time a man is tackled the same performance of throwing the ball back is gone through. The ground and goals are about the same size as ours, but there is a broad line of whitewash right across the ground every five yards of its length.

The side that first holds the ball continues to handle it—after each stoppage of the game necessitates the throw-back I have described—so long as they gain five yards by each rush, but if they fail to gain five yards the throw-back passes to the other side at the third failure. Now, one would imagine that a game played by these rules would be fast and lively, that there would be a good deal of drop-kicking at goal from the field, and that long runs would be made very often.

The game I saw was exactly the reverse. It was frightfully rough, so much so that twenty-three times did it stop while some injured player recovered himself, and that many injuries were expected was apparent from the fact that though there were only twenty-two players engaged, there were eight reserves for each side. It became positively monotonous to see a man knocked out every few minutes, and lie on his back until a nigger ran forward with a pail of water and revived him with a copious douching. Only twice during the hour-and-a-half's play was the ball kicked—each time a punt—and only three times did any player make a run of more than fifteen yards. The game was simply a succession of sharp and very short rushes ending in the whole of the twenty-two men being piled upon one another.

When a touch-down was obtained the attempt to kick the goal was made from the ten-yard mark, and the kicker had, therefore, to be very smart and quick, as the opposing forwards rush at the ball just as they do in Rugby. When the ball went out of bounds the players of the two sides pursued it and it belonged to the one whose man secured it.

There was no throwing out, but the players walked to nearly the middle of the ground and then the centre forward proceeded to throw the ball back between his legs in the manner I have described. The sharpness of the rushes led to frequent mistakes being made, and over and over again I saw a man collared below the knee and violently thrown on the ground when he was not even near the ball. This naturally led to a considerable amount of recrimination, and disputes were frequent.

The system of umpires and referees seemed much the same as ours. Six points are scored for a goal, four for a touch-down, and two if the other side touches-down in self-defence. I have played and seen a good deal of football, but I certainly never saw a less interesting game. It altogether lacked the dash and go which make the British football match so attractive to both player and onlooker. But then, as I have already said, I was told by the man who took me that it was quite a poor specimen of a first-class match. In spite of this, however, I venture to assert that, under the regulations by which the game is played in America, it is quite impossible to have such spirited and exciting play as is the rule in our football matches.

Football Players should also see Accident Insurance System on page 312.

£100 INSURANCE

FOR

FOOTBALL PLAYERS.

We undertake to pay ONE HUNDRED POUNDS *to whomsoever the proprietors of* PEARSON'S WEEKLY *may decide to be the next of kin of any football player who meets with his death by an accident while actually playing football. The only condition is that the player in question must be the possessor of a copy of the current number of* PEARSON'S WEEKLY, *which must bear his usual signature in ink on the line left blank at the foot of this notice. The copy need not be upon the person at the time of the accident. Notice of accident must be given within three days, and death must have occurred within twenty-four hours of the accident.*

Signed .....

Available until midnight, December 2nd, 1893.

WESTWARD HO!

V.—THE MILLIONAIRES OF AMERICA.

THE most extraordinary feature of American life to-day is unquestionably the vastness of the fortunes possessed by the wealthy families of the United States. The individual fortunes of America are infinitely greater than those of any country on earth are, or ever have been, and there are several Americans who are probably at least three times as wealthy as any person in the world outside their own country.

In making this statement, I do not include such potentates as the Sultan of Turkey, the Tsar of Russia, or the Shah of Persia, who are of course possessors of colossal sums. Their wealth, however, is to a large extent in such a form that they cannot dispose of it, whereas the fortunes of the American millionaires are theirs to do with exactly as they wish.

All thinking Americans are agreed that the greatest problem which their country has to face to-day is some means of controlling this terrific aggregation of capital in the hands of comparatively few individuals. The smart men of modern America have had such an opportunity of collecting wealth as has never occurred before in the history of the world, and can never occur again.

The rapid development and opening up of a country of immense natural resources has offered a chance of securing money-making advantages which have never before presented themselves in any state of society. It is almost impossible for an ordinary business man to conceive the magnitude of the properties owned by these American millionaires.

George Gould, for instance, may be said to own the Western Union Telegraph Company, with its 800,000 miles of wire and 22,000 offices scattered throughout the country; while the Elevated Railway system of New York is also under his control. Railway systems, with an infinitely greater mileage than that of any in the United Kingdom, are owned by individuals, while the same may be said of complete tramway systems in the largest cities in the States.

Every pint of oil that is sold in America is to all intents and purposes sold by one man, and in almost every other branch of commerce there is a controlling interest whose possessor is enabled to pocket tens of thousands with the same ease that the ordinary man of business pockets hundreds.

The other day I was introduced to one of the wealthiest men in the United States, and he very kindly asked me to dine and spend the evening with him. After dinner I brought the conversation round to the huge wealth of himself and others of his countrymen, and he talked most freely about it. He told me that I might use the information he gave me, but I am not at liberty to disclose his name, beyond saying that he is one of those mentioned later in this article.

He said that the figures he gave me as to the wealth of various persons were, of course, only according to his own estimate, but at the same time he considered that they might be taken as being as nearly accurate as the individuals themselves could supply. When wealth has reached such vast proportions as it has in these cases, the actual possessors of it are really unable to say what they are worth.

It is, for example, a fact that in the course of an action in the American Law Courts three or four years ago, Mr. John D. Rockefeller, the Standard Oil magnate, stated that he really could not tell how much he was worth within two or three millions sterling. I may here state that all the figures in this article are in pounds, not dollars, unless otherwise stated.

As a standard of comparison, let us take the Duke of Westminster, who is popularly supposed to be the wealthiest person in this country, and whose fortune is certainly under ten millions of money. My informant told me that there can be no question that John D. Rockefeller is worth at the very least £35,000,000, and this inconceivably large sum has been piled up in twenty years, whereas the Duke of Westminster's fortune represents the accumulations of a long and wealthy ancestry.

Mr. Rockefeller may unquestionably claim the distinction of having made money faster than any other man who has ever lived. Twenty years ago he was a newspaper reporter earning a salary of £3 a week. To-day he is undoubtedly the richest man the world has ever seen, having unfettered control of his wealth.

Some three years ago I told the story of the Standard Oil Company monopoly in *P. W.* Probably many readers remember it. It must suffice here to say that as the huge natural oil reservoirs of America yield up their product it is conducted through pipes, in many cases for several hundreds of miles, to the refineries, whence it is distributed all over the United States. And so perfect is the organisation that the Standard Oil Company, while selling the whole of the oil consumed, is able to absolutely dictate its price to the consumer.

The extraordinary thing about it is that oil is to-day considerably cheaper than it was before the Standard Oil Company began its operations. The economy of working things on the huge scale pursued by the company enables it to supply the public at a cheaper rate than they were supplied at before, and at the same time pocket the colossal fortunes owned by its chiefs.

My informant told me a good story about the Standard Oil folk, which he vouched for as true, and which, at all events, throws a curious light upon the ease with which the American public is manipulated to line the pockets of American monopolists.

The whole of the stock of the company is held by five persons, John D. Rockefeller, the principal owner, his brother William, Mr. Flagler, and two others. The profits are divided up annually, and if any member of the syndicate wishes to draw money during the year, it is a rule that the other four shall draw the same amount. Every fortnight they have a meeting. At a recent one, Flagler turned up and remarked that he wished to draw a considerable sum, as he had just bought a country house and wanted to pay for it. For this purpose he required a million dollars (£200,000). John Rockefeller touched a bell which summoned the cashier, and said to him:

"Mr. Wilson, kindly draw five cheques for a million dollars each."

Mr. Wilson retired, drew the cheques, and brought them in to be signed. After having appended his signature to the five slips of paper, Mr. Rockefeller looked up and remarked in a contemplative tone of voice:

"Mr. Wilson, this is quite a heavy draft on the company's account. I think, Mr. Wilson, that the price of oil had better be up half-a-cent for three weeks."

The price of oil was up half-a-cent accordingly, and the five million dollars found their way back again to the Standard Oil Company's account.

Mr. John D. Rockefeller is one of the few very wealthy men of America who turn their enormous means to really good use. He contributes most liberally to deserving charities, and has recently expended a vast sum on endowing a University in Chicago, to which Mr. Yerkes, a millionaire tramway owner in that city, has presented a telescope, which is the largest in the world, and which cost him £100,000.

William Rockefeller, the younger brother, has to scratch along on a paltry eight or ten millions. I saw his palace on the Hudson, which is supposed to be the finest country residence in America, and which is said to have cost him £500,000.

The American who comes next to John Rockefeller in the amount of his millions is Mr. William Waldorf Astor, who has lately settled down in England and bought the PALL MALL GAZETTE and the Duke of Westminster's magnificent residence at Cliveden. He is supposed to be worth about thirty millions, while the Astor estates altogether probably amount in value to at least a hundred millions.

Old John Jacob Astor, who laid the foundation of this enormous wealth, was the son of a small German tradesman, and came to America to peddle musical instruments. He engaged with great success in the fur trade, and, as he made money, bought property on the upper part of the island on which New York stands, and which was then quite countrified. The city occupied merely the extreme lower end of the island. As New York has spread the value of this property has been enhanced until it now stands at the figure given above.

Seeing that the Island of New York cannot by any possibility grow, and that as long as the present state of things lasts, New York, lying as it does with Europe on one side of it, and America on the other, must necessarily remain one of the two greatest cities in the world, a more desirable form of property could hardly be imagined.

On the Astor estate have recently been built the two most magnificent hotels in the world, one of which, the "Waldorf," cost a million of money, while the other, the "New Netherlands," ran into almost as much.

John Jacob Astor, the second brother, is supposed to be worth about fifteen millions, but he evidently has no intention of turning his back upon America as William Waldorf has done, for he is just building a colossal mansion near Central Park, New York.

The bulk of the Vanderbilt fortune is in the hands of two brothers, Cornelius and William K. Each of them is estimated to be worth about twenty millions sterling, which is invested in railways and Government bonds. The New York Central Railway, with its many connections and ramifications, is an asset of the Vanderbilt family.

The elder brother, Cornelius, attends regularly to business, and goes every day to his office at the Grand Central Station, which is the terminus of this line. He is much interested in church work, and gives largely to charity. His immense house in Fifth Avenue is now undergoing extensive alterations, and, it is said that by the time it is completed it will have cost him over a million sterling. I suppose it is twice as large as any nobleman's house in London.

The immense extent of the Vanderbilt fortune is chiefly owing to William H. Vanderbilt, who died in 1885, having seven years before that time inherited from his father, the Commodore, fifteen millions sterling, which in the short space of seven years he succeeded, by brilliant and successful speculation, in more than trebling.

William K. Vanderbilt, second of the brothers, is not a business man, and has the reputation of living more luxuriously than any other American. He devotes himself entirely to enjoying life, and does not seem to care what he spends so long as he attains this object.

The third son, Frederick, has also retired entirely from business, and is at present living on a scale only second to that of his brother William. George, the youngest brother, who, in common with Frederick, has to get along with about four millions or so, is thirty years of age, and of a very quiet and studious nature. He has, however, broken out a bit lately by spending £500,000 or so upon a mansion and a huge sporting estate in North Carolina.

These four brothers have five married sisters, each of whom is worth three millions. They live in a magnificent group of houses on Fifth Avenue. The "Vanderbilt Houses" are as much a landmark in New York as Hyde Park Corner is in London.

The way in which Jay Gould, whose son George reigns in his stead, acquired his wealth, was so freely discussed in the papers when he died about a year ago, that there is no need to refer to it here. He succeeded in piling up about £15,000,000. George Gould and his brother Edwin both work as hard as though they had been left to carve out their own fortunes, and both attend regularly every day at their offices in Broadway.

Collis P. Huntingdon, whose fortune aggregates about ten millions sterling, started his business career by trading a little farm which he inherited from his father for a lot of cheap clocks, which he peddled through the New England States. He was in the gold rush to California, and, finding that gold-digging did not bring in money quickly enough, started a general shop, and exchanged his goods for gold-dust and nuggets at about ten times their fair value. As his capital grew he increased his operations, until he was supplying the miners in his district with everything they needed, from bootlaces to machinery for developing their claims.

He finally joined some other men in railway enterprises, and is now, next to the Vanderbilts, the greatest railway owner in the world.

His three partners, Stanford, Hopkins, and Crocker, left at their deaths six, seven, and five millions respectively.

Mr. Russel Sage is computed to have a capital of eight millions, and is considered by those who know him intimately to be absolutely and without exception the meanest man in the world. He kept a little grocer's shop in his early days, and eventually became director of the bank in which he deposited his savings.

By careful speculation he amassed a great deal of money, and bought a small railway which the development of certain sections of the country rendered of great value, and which he sold to the Vanderbilts at a very large profit. Since then his principal business has been the advancing of money on the best securities to other millionaires who find themselves temporarily in a tight place.

Philip Armour, the leading man in the enormous meat packing trade of Chicago, has made at least seven millions out of his business. He is the owner of the St. Paul Railway, and has recently been devoting himself largely to speculating in the produce market with great success.

I suppose that most of the names I have already mentioned are more or less familiar to my readers as belonging to men worth many millions, but there are heaps and heaps of other Americans who own sums that range from three to eight millions sterling. Among them may be mentioned the Higgins, who are the greatest carpet manufacturers of the States, and who have made at least four millions out of their business; the Rhinelanders, whose sugar refinery interests have brought them in six millions, and the Schermerhorns, who were originally small shop-keepers, but many years ago became property-owners of the sort that hang on grimly to cabbage gardens until the city grows over

(Continued on the next page.)

153 INSURANCE CLAIMS HAVE BEEN PAID.

This Insurance holds good for any number of claims to the extent of £1,000—not for one only.

£1,000 COUPON TICKET. specially guaranteed by the

OCEAN ACCIDENT AND GUARANTEE CORPORATION, LIMITED,

40, 42, and 44, MOORGATE STREET, LONDON, E.C.

(To whom Notice of Claims, under the following conditions, must be sent within seven days to the above address.)

INSURANCE TICKET *Applicable to passenger trains in Great Britain and Ireland.*

Issued under Section 33 of the "Ocean Accident and Guarantee Company, Limited, Act," 1890.

ONE THOUSAND POUNDS

will be paid by the above Corporation to the legal representative of any person killed by an accident to the train in which the deceased was an ordinary ticket-bearing passenger (including holders of season and excursion tickets), and who, at the time of such accident, had in his, or her, possession, this coupon ticket or the paper in which it is, with his, or her, usual signature, written in ink or pencil on the space provided below, which is the essence of this contract. The paper may be left at his, or her, place of abode, so long as the coupon is signed.

PROVIDED ALSO, that the said sum will be paid to the legal representative of such person injured should death result from such accident within three calendar months thereafter.

This Insurance holds good for the current week of issue only, and entitles the holder to the benefit of, and is subject to, the conditions of the "Ocean Accident and Guarantee Company, Limited Act," 1890, Risks No. 2 & 3.

The purchase of this publication is admitted to be the payment of a Premium under Sec. 34 of the Act. A Print of the Act can be seen at the office of this Journal, or of the said Corporation. No person can recover on more than one Coupon Ticket of this paper in respect of the same risk.

Signature.....

Available from 5 p.m. of Friday, November 24th, 1893, until Midnight Saturday, December 2nd, 1893. (See column 3, page 315).

On Tuesday next look out for the Xmas number of "Short Stories," with its charming coloured cover, depicting a girl in a snow storm, its coloured plate "Needles and Pins," its stories by Conan Doyle, Henry Herman, "Riata," &c., and its illustrations by Miss Gertrude Demain Hammond, E. S. Hope, and other leading artists. Sixpence will buy it, though it does look like a shillingsworth.

them. Their estate in New York is worth quite six millions.

Another great New York property belongs to the Van Burens. Many years ago a small carpenter named Van Buren married the daughter of a market gardener named Spingler, whose garden extended over a large tract of what is now amongst the most valuable land in New York. The ground rents from this property amount to at least £300,000 a year, and the heiress to them is quite a young girl.

The wealthiest woman in the United States who has made her money herself is Hetty Green, who has accumulated about eight millions sterling by clever speculation in stocks and shares.

John W. Mackay, whose wife makes such a splash in Paris and London, is not one of the very wealthy men of America. But still I dare say most of us would consider ourselves sufficiently well off if we possessed the three millions on which he has to get along. His partner, James G. Fair, made about twice as much as Mackay possesses.

The senior partner in the famous banking firm of Drexel, which originated in Philadelphia, is worth probably eight millions or so, and George M. Pullman, whose name is so well known in connection with luxurious railway travelling, has pocketed quite three millions as the result of the comfort which he has secured for railway travellers almost all the world over.

There is a great Sugar Trust in America, the promoters of which hope to make as good a thing out of sugar as the Rockefellers have out of oil. Theodore Havemeyer, who has already profited to the tune of four millions by the sweet substance, a sum with which one would imagine any reasonable man would be content, is at the head of this enterprise.

There are plenty of other lesser American millionaires whose names could be mentioned on equal terms with those of whom I have last spoken, but a further catalogue would, I am afraid, be nothing but wearisome. Enough, I think, has been said to justify the statements with which this article opens, and to show that those far-sighted Americans who fear above any other danger that threatens their country this terrific aggregation of wealth in the hands of individuals, have plenty of facts wherewith to support their theories.

If the present state of affairs continues, the only possible outcome of it is that the huge monopolies already in existence, and the vast capital in the hands of the few individuals who have at present kept themselves to the front in the race for wealth, will engross every industrial enterprise on the Continent; with the result that the middle class, which must be the backbone of every nation, will simply cease to exist, and the United States will be peopled by a horde of quite poor people ruled by a handful of billionaires.

Another article next week.

CYCLIST: "Doctor, I wish you'd make out my bill."
Doctor: "I thought you weren't ready to pay it."
Cyclist: "I'm not; but a fellow to whom I'm selling it asked me what my new bicycle cost me, and I can't tell him until I hear from you."

"LOOK here, Jacob, this suit I got from you has all faded out."

"Mein frendt, dot vas all right. Dey vos made from the new and stylish shangeable goots. Your friendts dink you have two or dree suits as dose colours shange, don't it?"

153 INSURANCE CLAIMS HAVE BEEN PAID.

INSURANCE AGAINST GENERAL ACCIDENTS

ACCORDING TO CONDITIONS GIVEN BELOW.
Specially guaranteed by the

OCEAN ACCIDENT ASSURANCE CORPORATION, Limited.

£25 INSURANCE COUPON. £10

£25 *will be paid by the above Corporation to the Legal Representatives of any person killed by an accident to the train, steamboat, Tramway, Omnibus, or other public conveyance in which he or she was travelling as a passenger, or while walking on any street or public road within the United Kingdom as a private individual, should death result within one month after such injury, and the like amount will be paid should such injury not prove fatal, but result in the complete and irrecoverable loss of sight in both eyes, or the loss by actual separation of two legs, two arms, or a leg and an arm.*

£10 *will be paid should such injury only result in the loss as above defined of sight in one eye, or the loss of one arm or one leg, and £5 will be paid should such injury only result in the fracture of an arm or leg.*

£5 *will be paid to any person who shall sustain a fracture of an arm or leg or a broken collar-bone while engaged in playing Football, or while Cycling.*

Provided in all above cases that the person so killed or injured was the owner of this Insurance Coupon, with his or her usual signature written underneath, when the accident on which the claim is based occurred. The paper may be left at his or her place of abode so long as the coupon is signed.

This Insurance entitles the holder to the benefit of, and is subject to the conditions of, the "Ocean Accident and Guarantee Company, Limited, Act, 1890, Rules No. 2, 3, 5, and 6."

This Insurance is limited to One Coupon of this paper for each holder, and is not invalidated by any Insurance with this or any other Accident Company, but is in addition thereto.

Notice of Claim must be made to MR. C. ARTHUR PEARSON, *Henrietta Street, London, W.C., within seven days of the accident.*

*Signature*_____

(See column 3, page 315).

Available from 5 p.m. of Friday, November 24th, 1893, till midnight, Saturday, December 2nd, 1893.

APPLAUSE TO ORDER.

IN Paris just now a determined resistance is being brought to bear against the claques—men hired to applaud in the theatres. Claques, however, have flourished from time immemorial, and are not likely to die out yet awhile. In the time of the Romans as many as 5,000 men were hired to cheer a single man, and to be a member of a claque was to be considered an artiste.

Not only had they to shout, but they were required to imitate the clashing of broken jugs by snapping their fingers in unison, and to imitate the patter of hail and the droning of bees, for these were recognised signs of approval.

Coming to more recent times, the leader of a French claque considered himself very poorly off unless he made considerably over £1,000 a year. Indeed, the post of leader was so much sought after that as much as £5,000 was exacted as premium before a man was permitted to fill a vacancy.

The chief was paid no stated salary, but was allotted a certain number of seats, which he could sell at his own price; and these, together with the presents he received from the actors, amounted to a very substantial sum.

The claque was, and is still, nothing more than a gigantic fraud. Men are deputed to laugh immoderately at jokes, to applaud speeches, and women are actually employed to sob audibly and become hysterical during affecting scenes. In fact, in some foreign theatres, each member of the claque is given a printed list of instructions, which he or she is expected to follow to the letter.

Things came to such a pass some years ago that a play was placed in jeopardy through the machinations of rival claques. Jealous actresses would employ their own claques, and the ridiculous spectacle was presented of an actress being applauded from one part of the house, and soundly hissed from another.

Circumstances are considerably modified in France now, but we still have our claques here. They consist chiefly of dead-heads — persons who are expected to applaud in exchange for free admission. They appear for the most part on first-nights, when the fate of a play is in the balance, and are to be seen frantically clapping their hands when the remainder of the audience is half asleep. At other times foreign actresses fresh to the English stage hire men to applaud them on their first appearance. The whole business, however, is carried out so inartistically that the presence of a claque is nearly always detected.

AN ANTIDOTE FOR COWARDICE.

IN the States one is always hearing good stories of the American Civil War. Here is one, as nearly as possible in the words of the old soldier who told it to me.

Just before the battle of Antietam five recruits came down for my company. There were no bounty jumpers at that stage of the war, although the courage and patriotism of some of the recruits could not be vouched for. One of the five new men was named Danforth, a farmer's son, fresh from the cornfields. As we took up our line of march to meet Lee, this young fellow came to me and said:

"See here, sergeant, I guess I've made a mistake."

"How so?" I inquired.

"I hain't got no sand. I allus thought I had, but when I come down here and see what war is, I find I hain't got the pluck of a rabbit."

"That's bad."

"So 'tis; but it's jest the way I feel," the young farmer responded soberly. "We're goin' to hav a fight by 'n by, an' I know what'll happen. I shall bolt as sure as preachin'."

"Then you'll be called a coward, and disgraced for ever."

"I know it, an' I don't want to do it," said Danforth, "but I shall unless you can help me."

"What can I do for you?"

"Wal, if I can git mad, I'll be all right, an' forgit I'm scart. Now, if you'll keep your eye on me, an' as soon as we git within five miles o' Lee's army give me a stout kick, I'll guess I'll stand it."

After some further talk I promised Danforth to give him a kicking if he showed signs of running away. We were in Hooker's corps, and as we moved against Jackson, Danforth came up to me:

"Sergeant, kick me, or I shall run," he exclaimed. "I haven't got sand enough to see a chicken die."

We were moving through the timber, and I stepped behind him and "lifted" him as hard as I could.

He shot aside, and when next I saw him we were at a fence on the edge of a cornfield. The firing was hot, and men were falling on all sides. I had just fired from a rest on the top rail when Danforth came up, faced the other way, and said:

"More kicks, sergeant. My sand is going."

I kicked him again with a good deal of vigour. Just then we got the order to advance, and he was the first man over the fence. Half an hour later we were driven back, considerably disorganised, and as I reached the fence I came across Danforth again. He had a Confederate captain by the collar, and was carrying the officer's sword in his hand. As he saw me, he called out:

"Sand is all right, sergeant. No more kicks. As soon as I take this chap to the rear, I'm going back to collar old Stonewall Jackson himself, or die trying!"

GREAT TOWNS COMPETITION.

1,500 GUINEA ENGRAVINGS TO BE GIVEN AWAY.

No. 22.

SPECIAL OFFER TO THE INHABITANTS OF PORTSMOUTH, (INCLUDING PORTSEA, LANDPORT, FRATTON, SOUTHSEA, AND EASTNEY), PRESTON, AND PAISLEY.

As announced in previous issues we have devised a form of competition which, instead of being open to readers all over the kingdom, and thus, by the multitude of entries, affording individual competitors but a small chance of success, will be open to dwellers in particular towns only.

The prizes take the form of charming engravings, 20 by 30, handsomely framed in solid oak, of a kind that are sold in print-shops for a guinea apiece. The subjects have been carefully chosen for their artistic beauty, and in the case of each particular town the engravings will be on show somewhere while the competition is open.

For the purposes of this competition towns will be taken in alphabetical order. Every town containing at the last census 40,000 inhabitants or more in England will be admitted, and every town in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, of 20,000 or more.

The pictures will be presented in the proportion of one to every ten thousand of population, that is to say, Aberdeen with its population of 121,905 secured twelve pictures.

The towns will be arranged so that about thirty pictures are given away every week. This week the competition is open to dwellers in Portsmouth (including Portsea, Landport, Fratton, Southsea, and Eastney), Preston, and Paisley.

Name of Town.	Population.	Pictures.
Portsmouth	159,255 ..	15
Preston..	107,573 ..	10
Paisley	66,427 ..	6

The pictures are on view in Portsmouth at Mr. R. Bowyer's, 18, Queen Street, Portsea, and Mr. S. Downton's, 48, Great Southsea Street, Southsea; in Preston at Mr. P. Smalley's, 6, Lune Street, and at Mr. W. A. Dawson's, Bow Lane Post Office; and in Paisley at Mr. J. Kent's, 30, Causeyside Street.

Competitors must be resident in one of the above towns, taking the widest recognised boundaries. The form of competition, which we have adopted up to the present, has been running for the long period of twenty two weeks. A change is therefore now made.

The competition will this week be on the following lines:—

Engravings will be awarded to the competitors who forward the best answers to the question:—

"Why should I receive an engraving?"

Competitors are requested to send their solutions in an envelope with the word PICTURE plainly marked on it.

The following regulations must be strictly adhered to:—

On a sheet of note-paper the competitor must write his name and address, and below it his solution. This must be witnessed by three other persons who are not entering the competition, and who must also append their names and addresses.

Each attempt must be accompanied with the coupon at the top right-hand corner of front page of the wrapper of this issue, and no person must send more than one attempt.

The persons who witness the best reason will receive half-a-crown each.

Letters only. Please post early, to arrive at least by first post Wednesday, November 29th.

NEXT WEEK'S PRIZES WILL BE FOR THE INHABITANTS OF PERTH, PARTICK, READING, ROCHDALE, ROTHERHAM, AND PONTYPRIDD.

After the large towns are exhausted, competitions will be held fo which dwellers in small towns and villages alone are eligible.

RESULT OF GREAT TOWNS COMPETITION.

No. 21.

The Buried Names in the Competition which we set to our readers in Norwich and Nottingham were as follows:—

Oscar, Kenneth, Launcelot, Oliver, Theodore, Christopher.

A beautiful handsomely framed Guinea Etching has been awarded to each of the following persons:—

IN NORWICH:—

F. S. Stackard, 7, Park Lane; E. Bloomfield, 28, Garden Road; Henry Muskett, 145, Magdalen Street; Henry James Comer, 167, Upper Rupert Street, South Heigham; T. Rosher, 3, Oak Villas, Oak Road; Mrs. Fryer, 29, Rampant Horse Street; John Scott, 4, Heathside Road, Thorpe Hamlet; E. Gilbert, 3, Oxford Street, Unthanks Road; W. P. Widdows, 46, Connaught Road; Taff Holt, 70, Prince of Wales Road.

IN NOTTINGHAM:—

G. F. Ball, 8, Union Road; Frank Galpin, 12, Lilac Street; Thomas H. Adams, 29, Fisher Gate; George Gill, 21, Brecon Street, St. Ann's Well Road; J. W. Broadbury, 168, Blue Bell Hill; H. J. Goodson, 43, Manor Street, Sneiton; R. C. V. D'Arcy, 29, Bow Street, Wollaton Street; D. C. Woodroffe, 36, Colville Terrace, Colville Street; F. Owen, 32, Long Row; Harry Bennett, 152, Woodborough Road; Edward Haylock, 9, Charwood Grove; E. Lees, 6, Billivant Street; W. A. Hall, 51, Portland Road; C. N. Barham, Alexandra Park; Raymond James, 3, Shakespeare Villas; Edward Cheetham, Station Street; Mrs. F. Pattrick, 24, Wainwright Street, Livingstone Road; R. A. Sutherland, 309, Lenton Boulevard; Fred W. Neal, Telegraph Department, P. O.; H. E. Partridge, Hillside, Sherwood Rise; Mrs. E. Case, 25, Ridgway Street.

The witnesses to the five-hundredth correct application, and to whom 2s. 6d. each has been sent, were:

Albert James Smith, 121, Ber Street, Norwich.
William Booty, 18, Norfolk Street, Norwich.
Walter Green, 4, Bexfield Buildings, Rupert Street, Norwich.

"WHO is the belle to-night?" said she,
As they stood on the ball-room floor.
He looked around the room to see,
And she spake to him no more.

FATHER: "I wish you would not lace so tight. It is positively inhuman."

Daughter: "Why, I thought you would be pleased, father. The material for this dress cost a guinea a yard."

SHE: "Oh, I'm awfully worried. I lost my diary in the train yesterday. Just fancy some horrid person getting hold of it and reading it through!"

He: "Ha, ha! Well, that is a good joke! Did it have your name in it?"

She: "No; but it had yours."

He: "Great powers! What? You had better advertise at once for it."

30, Etruria Street, Stockport Road, Manchester.—Dear Sir,—I was very much pleased to see that I was successful in your Great Towns Competition, and was really astonished to receive such a grand engraving on presenting your letter to Messrs. Smith & Son. All who have seen it, and a great many have done so, are equally surprised and regret they were not so fortunate as yours truly, E. HORNBY.——Mr. W. WORTHINGTON, of 62, Bickley Street, Moss Side, Manchester, says:—It is with great pleasure that I acknowledge the receipt of the etching you so kindly notified was awarded me. The picture is in every regard—subject, treatment, and execution, framing and finish—quite what you say of it, and I (with many others, assuredly!) hope that the advertisement so secured will be beneficial to "Pearson's Weekly" in the same degree that the gift is deserving of praise.

WOMAN, THE MYSTERY.

A STORY OF THREE REVOLUTIONS.

By HENRY HERMAN,

Author of "Pandora's Box," "The Loser Pays," "Eagle Joe," "His Angel," "The Great Becklesthwaite Mystery," etc.

CHAPTER XXXV.

HENRI AGAIN.

TELL a woman that she may have all the world with the exception of one solitary fig-tree, and she will think herself very badly treated. She will not care a rap for all the world and its pleasures. That solitary fig-tree will be the one particular thing upon possessing which she has set her heart, and without which life will be sunless and black indeed. Gold and diamonds, laces and velvet, satins and fine linen, all will be dross. Stately palms, lovely roses, orange-trees in sweetest blossom, will have no charm for her. That one fig-tree she will want, and to be denied it will rankle in her mind as an injustice not to be meekly borne.

Helen was rich beyond the dreams of avarice. Lords and princes paid their court to her. She might have chosen a mate among statesmen, savants, and poets. But there was one man whom she could not cow into submission, and she cried in her heart for the subjection of that man as the child of the story cried for the proverbial moon.

Helen sat at dinner that evening sombre and silent. Mrs. Berinquay, never too talkative a lady, who resented Helen's reappearance in the world as an infliction of a none too just Providence, and who bore it with the meekness of a martyr, persuaded herself for the moment that Helen's thoughts were turned from worldly things, and gave herself up to the hope, which she dared not as yet express in words, that Helen might repent of her sins, and restore to Rodbert Berinquay, Esquire, and to Mrs. Rodbert Berinquay, the fortune of which she had so foully robbed them.

Mr. Rodbert Berinquay in his turn turned up his eyes towards the ceiling, on which Cupids fat wrestled with Cupids lean in the endeavour to drop flowers which never reached the people below.

Adams, who sat opposite Helen, noticing her unusual silence, asked:

"What is the matter, my dear? You seem to be out of sorts."

"I?" queried Helen impetuously. "What should disturb me?"

"It is useless to deny it," rejoined Adams. "You are not yourself at all. Something has gone wrong, I know. Ah," he went on, "I know what it is. That man Roberts has refused to relinquish his bargain."

"Worse than that!" cried Helen. "I invited him, and he never came; and, more than that, he has not even vouchsafed a reply."

"That is strange," suggested Adams.

"Not at all strange," retorted Helen. "Most men are boors. I wish there were no men in the world."

Helen remained in her peevish mood throughout the evening. Even Madame Nilsson's matchless singing at the opera could not rouse her spirits to warmth or enthusiasm.

When she returned home she examined her letters with a nearly fevered haste, and tore open one after the other. Finding no missive from "that man Roberts," she threw them all into a corner of her sofa, where they henceforth lay neglected.

She retired to rest, but sleep could not be charmed to her couch. She kept repeating to herself the words:

"What if he be Henri? What if he be Henri?"

The next morning also brought no relief in the shape of a letter from that wretched man Roberts.

Her courier included an autograph note from the Emperor, inviting her to Compiègne, but it could not excite pleasurable emotion in her.

Just then, had she been asked whether she preferred the gift of eternal youth—and to most women that might have seemed a tempting bait—or to have that man Roberts brought to her in chains to wreak her sweet or bitter will upon him, she would have selected the object of her own private vengeance, and been content.

How she hated that man Roberts! And yet now and then the phrase, "But what if it be Henri?" thrilled her very soul.

What would she do if that man were Henri, the man whom as a girl she had loved, the only man in this wide, wide world to whom her heart had gone forth at any time of her existence, the only man on earth before whom she had to stand shame-faced, and to confess that she had been the cause of misery to him—a man to whom she was deeply indebted, for she could not help saying to herself, "He saved my life, and risked his own in so doing."

What would she do? What would she say, if that man Roberts were Henri Sainton suddenly grown rich, aye, even richer than herself?

She dared not hint a syllable of such a possibility to any of the friends who surrounded her, though her heart yearned for precise knowledge.

It was nearly eleven o'clock when a letter was brought to her—a legal kind of document.

Hélène tore it open hastily, and her heart nearly stood still when she read the lines. The letter was written by the firm of solicitors who were the legal advisers of the United States Consulate.

"Our client, Mr. Henry Roberts," it said, "has received the note which you were kind enough to address to him, and in which you express a desire to purchase the house and grounds, No. 99, Rue Lord Byron.

"Our client has just bought these premises intending to occupy them himself, but he could not think of retaining them if you wish to possess them. He has, therefore, instructed us to make out the conveyance in your name, and we shall be glad if you will appoint a time most convenient to yourself when the title deeds may be handed to you.

"Mr. Roberts will be highly gratified if you will allow him to settle this transaction in this simple and convenient manner."

What did it all mean? Who was this strange man who handed over to her property worth perhaps half a million of francs, and never asked for a "Thank you"—who even went so far as to decline her invitation, while he made her a present of that mansion and those lovely grounds, as if they were a box of chocolates?

Her first impulse of astonishment passed quickly, and then her usual petulant mood asserted itself. The man meant to insult her, she argued. How dare he make her a present without obtaining her leave and licence first of all?

Then again the phrase kept dinning in her ear, "But what if it be Henri?"

Henri, she remembered, even all those years ago, had been generous, had been lavish with what little he possessed. He had no sooner earned a few francs than he would expend them on ribbons, or gloves, or flowers, for her. It was not much, but it was all he then had, and she—how had she treated him in return?

If it were Henri, the man's action would not only be excusable, it would be generous and, as she came to think of it, just like Henri of old, gallant in his untutored way, and with a rough, impetuous dash about him, which was his characteristic. If Henri Sainton had grown rich, as people described Henry Roberts, he would not deign to waste words over half-a-million; and from him such a present would come to her steeped in bitter-sweet memories which had no offence about them.

Adams and Walter both came to her boudoir shortly after that, and she asked Adams to make searching enquiries about "that man Roberts'" antecedents and personality.

"What has he done now?" asked Adams.

"He has made me a present of that house over there. He has actually dared to make me a present——"

"He is a brave man," rejoined Adams with a smile. "Perhaps he does not know the terrors in store for him. I would rather face twenty lions any day than offend you."

"You are all alike!" cried Helen impetuously. "Not one of you has the chivalry to pity a woman—no sooner is she in distress than she is fair game to you."

Adams pleaded the most humble contrition, and declared himself ready for any penance.

"Well, then," said the offended beauty, "go about the business, and bring me exact information this afternoon."

After luncheon the two gentlemen returned.

"We have been at every place we could think of," said Adams, "and I think we have all the information that can be obtained in Paris. To start with, if it is of any interest to you, Mr. Henry Roberts is unmarried."

Helen tossed her head.

"As if I cared for that!" she exclaimed. "What more?"

"I am told that he is either a Canadian or a Louisianian, strange to say," continued Adams, "for he is said to speak English with a trace of a French accent."

Helen straightened herself on her couch, and listened more interestedly.

"Go on," she said, "go on!"

"He holds a very large stake in American railways," said Walter, "and he was offered a nomination for Congress, but he declined."

"How dense you men are!" cried Helen. "What interest has that for me? Where does he come from? What is he? Who is he?"

"He is Mr. Henry Roberts, of Denver City, Colorado."

"Roberts or Jones or Smith or Brown or Green, what matters the name? What was he before he came to Colorado?"

"That is just the difficulty," rejoined Adams. "Nobody seems to know. We enquired at the United States Consulate, at the United States Legation, at all the banks, at every other place we could think of, and the only person who could give us any information at all was a bar-tender in the Rue Scribe, not a very reliable source of information, perhaps."

"And what did he say?" asked Helen eagerly.

"He says that he knew Mr. Henry Roberts just before the end of the war in St. Louis, that Mr. Roberts about that time was engaged in the rather dangerous, but profitable occupation of bounty-jumping,* and being laid by the heels one night, managed to escape, borrowing five dollars from the bar-tender, with which he disappeared westward. The bar-tender has since then received an anonymous five-hundred-dollar note, which finally proved to him that the millionaire, Henry Roberts, was his friend the bounty-jumper."

"But what else?" asked Helen peevishly. "Where did he come from before he arrived at St. Louis?"

"We have not been able to learn," said Adams.

"What is the good of you men after all?" exclaimed Helen. "When a woman wants a thing done, she had better do it herself. I will go and find out for myself."

The discovery was more easily spoken about than accomplished. When you start on a journey, it is well to know where to begin. But Helen had no more idea whom to ask, nor what to do, nor where to inquire than she had of constructing a flying-machine.

That afternoon she took her usual drive in the Bois de Boulogne, accompanied by Mrs. Rodbert Berinquay.

The fashionable promenade was crowded with the Paris world of fashion. Interminable rows of carriages plodded their ways up and down between the acacias.

Helen soon grew weary of acknowledging the courteous salutes with which she was greeted on every side, and sat in her landau, staring at vacancy, when the carriage came to a stop, being blocked by the vehicles ahead.

A gentleman was leaning against the iron railing which separated the foot-walk from the carriage road, and Helen recognised, and bowed to him. He was a French nobleman who had considerable possessions in America, and had been introduced to her by Denon.

A conversation sprang up consisting of the usual banalities of the place and season, when Helen for the first time noticed a stoutish, hale and hearty, good-looking, middle-aged man standing next to the gentleman who was conversing with her. As she looked the colour faded from her cheeks and neck, and she stared so curiously that the count said blandly:

"You seem to know my friend, Miss Berinquay. Allow me to introduce you to Mr. Henry Roberts."

Helen's eyes were fixed upon the man's face. Never was a bird more helpless under the fascination of a snake than Helen at that moment.

"Miss Berinquay and myself have met before," said Mr. Henry Roberts in good English with the barest tinge of a French accent in it.

There was no mistaking the voice. There was no mistaking the face.

Both were Henri's.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A STRANGE PROPOSAL.

WITH the sight of Henri's face, the memory of Henri rushed into Helen's mind, as she had seen him on that fateful night when Quayle was about to murder her, and Henri had flung himself, barely in the nick of time, upon her would-be assassin.

The remembered scene flashed away with the same heart-beat, and she saw Henri as he was years ago, when he took leave of her in the garret in the Rue Saint Jacques.

She felt herself quiver and shiver with these thrilling memories, and she, who had never before lost her self-possession in the presence of any man, held out a faltering hand, and could only smile a sickly recognition.

There is a saying, "Money makes the man," which would be truer if it were rendered, "Money can make a man." Henri Sainton, the reckless defender of the barricades during those terrible days of June, eighteen forty-eight, Henry Roberts, the soldier in the Louisiana battalion, and Henry Roberts, the Colorado millionaire, were no more like one another than a chimpanzee is like a lion.

Henri had always had in his nature the germs of a rare character. Dissolute habits, idleness, and a kind of devil-may-care defiance of fate, had in Henri Sainton crushed and trodden under foot these seeds and left his traits in their meanest attributes.

He was the kind of man who liked to fling money about, if he had little or much, and in his endeavours to get money to throw away he stooped to many contemptible actions. He was brave, there could be no question on that subject. He had faced death a dozen times without flinching.

Then came wealth, huge, uncontrollable wealth. No wish on earth that mortal man could harbour in his bosom, and that was within the bounds of the reasonable, was denied to him.

He rubbed shoulders with men and women of education and of breeding, and their example was contagious with a man who had the faculty of seeing his faults and of avoiding them when he saw them.

Henri Sainton, if not a gentleman in the stern and full meaning of the word, was as near the real article as the best of veneer could make it.

There was one thing that he had wished for, that he would have prayed for if such a thing as prayer had been possible to him, namely, to meet Helen, to stand on an equal pinnacle with her, to be able to remind her of the past.

He resembled Helen in this regard, that he had no love for any woman. Woman to his mind was a plaything. The tender feeling which he had entertained for Helen in bygone days was but a memory to him, a pleasurable memory, but not of sufficient attraction to stir his pulse when he found himself face to face with her again.

He touched the outstretched hand with his fingers and felt it icy cold. His eyes met Helen's, and he saw her quail beneath his gaze.

Helen's perturbation, however, was momentary only. The next few heart-beats restored her equanimity of mind, and with a quick resolve she dashed the distressing reminiscences out of her mind.

"I am glad to meet Mr. Roberts," she said, "even if it is only to chide him."

"I am a very repentant sinner," rejoined Henri, with the merest and quaintest trace of a French accent. "Point out my fault, and it shall disappear or be atoned for."

"I invited you to my five o'clock tea," said Helen, "and you did not come."

"I will prove my repentance," said Henri. "If I may, I will come uninvited."

Their eyes met again, and Helen, by this time being in full possession of her quick wits, held up a warning finger.

"That would be to reward you for having sinned," she said. "No, no! I shall have to be the judge, and I will dictate the fine."

At that moment the line of carriages began to move, and Helen's coachman, following those in front of him, drove away.

Helen drove home that afternoon wrapped in a delicious reverie. She knew not whether she had hoped or dreaded that Henry Roberts might prove to be Henri Sainton; but now, as she knew him to be Henri Sainton, her heart felt warmer for the discovery.

Yet, had some teasing sprite whispered in her ear at that moment that it was possible for her to love any man, she would have smiled in unbelieving derision.

The men who surrounded her in every-day life were gentlemen among gentlemen. Bearers of some of the proudest names in Europe had offered her their coronets, and she had sent them away without a further thought.

* During the last years of the Civil War, persons who enlisted in the Federal service were granted large sums of money as bounty. Many idle fellows used this opportunity to secure the money prize, and then decamped without joining the army. This was called "bounty-jumping."

At Christmas, a new story by the author of "The Angel of the Revolution" will commence in these pages.

When her hand had rested on the arm of the man who at that moment held the fate of Europe, of peace and war, of life and death of millions at his will, she had felt no especial pleasure. She had taken that compliment, with all the rest, as a tribute due to her, and it had left her cool and nearly ungratified.

But when in Henry Roberts she recognised Henri, the companion of her childhood, the sweetheart of her early days, her whole frame was moved as by an electric contagion, and it seemed to her for the first time for many years as if there might be a pleasure in this world of which she had not yet tasted, and a sip of which might have been a share of an earthly heaven to her.

"He saved my life," she kept saying to herself, as she was driven back to her house. "He is brave, he is rich, and he looks a gentleman."

But all the men about her had the same good qualities. They all were brave; they all had sufficient fortune for their wants; and they not only looked like gentlemen, but there could be no doubt of their right to the appellation.

And yet not one of them had been able to creep into a corner of her heart, whilst Henri had only to come to instal himself there with a brazen effrontery which seemed delicious to her.

When Helen reached home she found Lord Yorley waiting for her in the drawing-room.

The old nobleman bore his eighty years with a sturdy vigour. He was a portly gentleman, staid and grave. His life had been one of many troubles, first for his sister, then about his son Walter, and the long and wearying trials had saddened and softened him.

Helen, who had never known her father or mother, had looked upon Lord Yorley with feelings of dutiful reverence since she had become aware of her relationship to him. To her he was the link with the dead past which had been pregnant of so many adventures to her.

Lord Yorley, on his part, had always treated her with parental affection. He had early become aware that Helen had a will of her own, and had never pressed unsolicited or unwelcome advice upon her.

She had chosen her friends and her places of residence according to her own sweet will and fancy. Mr. and Mrs. Rodbert Berinquay had never been Lord Yorley's favourites. The old gentleman had always looked with disapproval upon Mr. Rodbert Berinquay's endeavours to possess himself of Helen's fortune. To Lord Yorley his cousin's many applications to the Court of Chancery and other Courts, while Helen's life or death were matters of doubt, seemed like attempts to rob a grave, even before the corpse was laid into it.

When Helen selected Mrs. Rodbert Berinquay as her chaperone, Lord Yorley simply shrugged his shoulders and said nothing. To his mind his maiden sister and the sister of Helen's mother, the Honourable Miss Henrietta Glaydes, would have been the more suitable person.

But Helen quickly perceived that Miss Henrietta Glaydes was moulded of a far sterner material than diplomatic and yielding Mrs. Rodbert Berinquay.

Miss Henrietta Glaydes, a spinster of seventy, very deaf and correspondingly suspicious, would not have been satisfied to act the part of chaperone; she would have insisted upon being consulted, and upon her advice being followed. Mrs. Rodbert Berinquay, on the other hand, made an excellent lay figure at the head of Helen's table, and that was exactly what Helen wanted.

Helen noticed immediately that Lord Yorley was less at his ease than was his habit.

The old nobleman's visits, even when he was in Paris, were far from frequent. His life had been one of retirement of late, and he did not care to meet the crowd of talkative gentlemen and self-assertive ladies who frequented Helen's salon.

Helen, therefore, shrewdly suspected that her uncle's call was not one of courtesy only.

"Something about that unfinished Chancery business," she said to herself. "I wonder whether it will ever end."

"Now you are not going to scold me this afternoon," she said, poutingly, as she held out her hand. "I have just mentally run over the catalogue of all my sins, and I find that I have committed none against you."

"I have not come to scold you, my child," said Lord Yorley, placing a chair by her side, and seating himself there. "I have come to speak to you about a matter that concerns me deeply, and in which I hope to interest you."

Helen opened her big blue eyes wide. The preamble seemed so very serious, and she was not at all seriously inclined at that moment.

Her heart was full of Henri. Her half-dreaming eyes could see Henri Sainton in the dim haze of every shaded corner. Even while she was talking she forgot her uncle who was sitting by her side, and she asked herself whether Henri had gone home, or whether he had gone to his club, or whether—and she felt a little colder, and she bit her lip at the thought—perhaps he had gone to see another woman.

Lord Yorley sat waiting for a reply. Helen started up as if suddenly waking from a dream, and said, with a smile that had but a forced gaiety in it:

"Well, go on. I am listening."

"I have come, my dear child," said Lord Yorley, "to speak to you about my boy Walter."

That was something new. What possible communication could Lord Yorley make to her about Walter? For the moment it interested her but little.

"Walter?" she said. "What about Walter?"

Lord Yorley moved uneasily on his chair. His niece seemed barely to appreciate that he was speaking to her, much less to suspect what he was going to say, and he had hoped that the first few phrases would convey to her a hint of what was coming.

"Walter, as you know," he said with slow deliberateness, "is now my only son. On poor Alfred's death six months ago he became my heir. He will one day, when I am gone, be Lord Yorley. His fortune, when he will take my place, will be ample, though not quite as large as yours.

"My dear child," he said more fervently, and drawing his chair closer to her, "Walter loves you. You are his goddess on earth. He has loved you for many years. He has loved you so truly that he has never dared to tell you about his love."

Helen's attention was roused by the old man's fervour and passion of speech.

It was to be a proposal of marriage, then, and at that moment she was but little prepared to receive a proposal of marriage from any man except Henri. But Walter had certainly a distinct claim upon her, a claim which, she was bound to confess, could not be so easily put aside.

"I have known that for many years," she replied in a mere whisper, and with her eyes on the ground. "I have known all along that Walter loved me."

"I am glad of that. I am truly glad of that," broke in Lord Yorley, "because it makes my task easier. Walter would have lived the rest of his life as he has done, without venturing to tell you what I have told you, without venturing to ask you what I am about to ask for him. He is one of those strong men who can bear torture unflinchingly, and I know that his life, ever since he has returned, has been one of willing, uncomplaining, unmurmuring torture. He has seen men around you, some worthy, others less so, who have appeared to enjoy your favour, and he has stood by and allowed them to approach you, one by one, and—the truth must be told—you have put them all aside, one by one."

Helen was more than interested now. She was impressed. And as the old man's gaze met hers, he saw that he was progressing favourably. She had touched his arm with her hand, and when he stopped to look at her she tapped him gently.

"Go on," she whispered.

"I know," continued Lord Yorley, "that if your dear dead father, or my poor Agatha were alive now, they would join me in pleading my boy's cause. I know that they would wish, as I wish, and as I hope may come true, that my Walter and you may become man and wife——"

Helen leaned back on her sofa. She had received many proposals of marriage, and she had listened to them with laughing ears and a mocking heart.

But this was a different case.

Had Lord Yorley come to her a week ago—aye, had he even come to her two days ago, the chances were even that Helen would have said to herself, "After all, Walter is the best among the men I know. He is true. He risked his life to find me years ago. I know that no man in this world loves me better, or can love me more truly." She would have hesitated perhaps for a moment or two, but she might have consented, and perhaps would have consented.

Now the case was different. Another figure had stepped in between her and Walter's love. Henri had sprung up like a mocking sprite out of a cavern of fable. And he skipped and romped through the picture of her life, and all her finer sentiments shrank shiveringly beneath the uncouth whirligig.

Helen was deliberating what to say, when she was roused by a knock at the door, and Adams's voice was heard asking:

"May I come in?"

Lord Yorley turned on his chair with a nearly angry movement when Helen replied:

"Come in, of course," to Adams.

"I have news that may interest you, my dear," said Adams, after the customary apology to Lord Yorley. "That wretched man Roberts, as you call him, has just been thrown from his horse at the Rond Point. He has been taken to the chemist's shop there, and they say he is badly hurt."

Helen jumped up with her face as white as a sheet, and darted at the bell with one sweep.

"Tell Jacqueline to bring me my hat and shawl immediately," she said to the servant.

"What are you going to do?" asked Adams.

"I am going to Mr. Roberts, and you must come with me and try to save the life of the man who saved mine."

Lord Yorley sat back on his chair and brushed back his white hair with a tremulous hand.

(More of this next week.)

"MY friend," said a doctor to his Irish patient, "be composed; we must all die once."

"An' it's that vexes me," replied Pat. "If it were more than onst, sure I'd be aisy enough."

WIFE: "John, dear, you know how I have been skimping and stinting myself to be able to get a sealskin jacket. Now I wish you would help me."

JOHN: "How much do you need?"

WIFE: "The jacket is £20, and I have it all but £19."

TOMMY: "I don't think it's right children should go to school for so little. Pa ought to have to pay more than he does."

ETHEL: "Why?"

TOMMY: "'Cos then he wouldn't be able to afford to send us."

BLANDE (sitting in his comfortable apartment): "How I pity the poor such a night as this."

BLUFF: "Then why don't you put on your coat and go out and see if you cannot render assistance to some of them?"

BLANDE: "Ah! then I shouldn't be so comfortable as I am now, and might forget the poor and begin to pity myself. That would be selfish, you know."

CURIOSITY IN MAN AND BEAST.

Is not this the distinctive feature of the curiosity of animals compared with curiosity in man—animals fear and resent change, disliking what is new, while to man the unexpected is often a source of wonder and delight? Their impression is usually one of danger—his, of pleasure.

Notice the cat when something new is brought into the room—a piece of furniture, or even a small article like a visitor's handbag. Tom, unless he has a kittenish recklessness, or the gravity and repose that come with long experience of the disturbing ways of men, will approach the object with an air of caution, suspicion, and aversion, yet he will be drawn to examine it when its quietness seems to intimate that it is harmless.

A cow will approach a new object with fascinated, but timorous, suspicion; and a horse is even more timid, gazing at a distance for awhile, ready to flee in a moment. The monkey will snatch at everything that is new and deliberately examine it, till, finding that he cannot eat it or mock mankind with it, he will drop it and let it pass from his shallow memory.

There is a pathos in the slenderness of animal curiosity—it is so easily satisfied; the thought, if thought it be, usually ends with the first flush of surprise and the impression of safety.

That can, perhaps, hardly be said to be the case with the dog, who is a fussy busybody, trained to observation and loving new experiences. We often fail to realise how immensely the dog has been raised above other animals by his companionship with man.

His knowledge of the world is so varied that, though he is always alert, and seeing something that interests him, he is rarely possessed by the frightened curiosity of less experienced animals, and, when his curiosity is excited, he conducts his investigations in a thorough way to a business-like conclusion. If he is startled by a very human-like scarecrow, waving arms in the middle of a field, he will not watch it fearfully at a distance until he has been accustomed to it, and then forget it, but will bark his way towards it, covering his fright by trying to terrify it, until closer sight and scent convince him that he has been imposed upon.

Even then he will not depart with the shallow satisfaction of animals that are content to have got over their fear, but if he is a dog of character and humour—for some dogs have a deal of humour—he will tear the scarecrow's coat half off in retaliation for the trouble he has taken. His is an intelligent curiosity, that almost passes beyond the instinct of self-preservation, and reaches a desire for a knowledge on its own account.

The dog is never tired of making tours of inspection that serve no purpose except to gratify his inquisitiveness; and in this way he almost bridges the gulf between the mild indifference of animals, that are only frightened into curiosity, and the objectless prying of inquisitive men and women.

A.: "It is when a man is in trouble that he knows the value of a wife."

B.: "Yes; he can put all his property in her name."

FUNNY PASSENGER (the conversation turning on the hard life of the horses): "Ah, I see you're not a believer in the transmigration of souls!"

DRIVER: "Well, I don't know, sir. For my part I likes 'em fried in the usual way!"

IT was a few minutes before dinner when little Fred inquired:

"Mamma, have I been bad to-day?"

"Yes, Freddie, very bad indeed."

"Do you think you will send me to bed without any supper?"

"I have a great mind to."

"Well, mamma, I wish you would let me know now, so that I can tell how much dinner to eat."

PUZZLE RESULT.

"Besmeared" is the word represented by the diagram in *P.W.* for week ending November 18th.

A miniature dictionary has been forwarded to the following persons:—

William Cawkell, Station Street, Huddersfield; F. Hill, s.s. "Ninian Stuart," care of Morel Bros. & Co., Cardiff; Miss Gibbs, Bridge House, Aylesford, Kent; J. Stagg, Droitwich; A. Hill, 4, Marine Terrace, Rodwell, near Weymouth; W. H. Staveley, 15, Lune Street, Preston; N. Douald, 6, Logan Terrace, South Shields; Leon Woollard, 7, Queen's Terrace, Boston Road, Hanwell; K. A. Cox, 4, Lyndale Terrace, Washington Road, Bridgewater; J. Webster, 1, Southern Terrace, Penarn, Carmarthen; George Webb, Cheswynd End, Newport, Salop; A. Tebbutt, 1, Cope Street, Nottingham; Henry Bushell, 29, Park Crescent, Bradford; W. Griffiths, 1, Exton Park, Chester; A. E. Court, 37, Guildhall Street, Folkestone; Miss H. Holt, 30, Shirley Road, Freemantle, Southampton; L. Wilkinson, Kentfield, Kendal; Miss Sedder, 41, Fore Street, Saltash, Cornwall; H. Palmer, Felixstowe Station, Great Eastern Railway; M. Bush, 227, Cheltenham Road, Bristol; W. Lomasney, 12, Cadogan Street, Chelsea; H. Campbell, 212, Wandsworth Road, S.W.; Miss Daisy Willcox, 15, Queen Street, Wells, Somerset; J. Flynn, 14, Pennpont Street, Bath; Mrs. Welch, New Road, Bromyard, Herefordshire; A. Davis, 6, Johnson Street, Old Trafford, Manchester; R. Constable, Grammar School, Thorne, Doncaster; Miss F. Marshall, 2, Woodville Road, Bowes Park, N.; W. M. Neilans, Mount Vilne, Tivadmonth, Berwick-on-Tweed; Miss M. Jones, 11, Park Road, Golborne, Newton-le-Willows; R. Barbour, Hamilton Villa, Ballyholme, Co. Down; R. F. Dengran, 81, Innisfallen Parade, Donan Street, Dublin; A. C. Phelps, 228, Burbary Street, Birmingham; William Mullis, 24, Queen Street, Banbury, Oxon; W. J. Brotherton, 29, Hill Street, Stourbridge; William Coker, Laxham House, Lowder Road, Holyhead; William Warner, Erith Working Men's Club, Erith; G. F. Evans, Eversley, Sittingbourne; Robert Thomas, Byrn Offa, Holywell, North Wales; Harold Sheldon, Rotherham; C. H. Smith, 13, White Cross, Hereford; A. D. Davies, Blaengwaur Cottage, Aberdare; T. Morgan, 25, High Town, Hereford; A. E. Chapman, 107, Vassall Road, Brixton Road; Charles Mortimer, 2, Sidney Villas, Bexley Heath; F. Davenport, Post Office, Whitefield, Manchester; B. Crawford, 32, Kimberley Road, Nunhead, S.E.; Thomas Kellam, Tabernacle Terrace, Carmarthen; F. Elliott, 28, Kenway Road, Clapham.

A thrilling serial story by Henry Herman, author of "Woman, the Mystery," commences in the Christmas Number of "Short Stories."

FICTION.

LOOKING BACKWARD.

I REMEMBER, I remember,
The hat my mother wore,
How sweet her face when framed beneath
That dainty bit of straw;
But the little foot beneath her gown,
With slipper trim and neat,
Will claim my recollection,
Till my heart shall cease to beat.

I remember, I remember,
In years long passed away,
A little tender spot whereon
That slipper used to play.
And as my heart went pit-a-pat
That slipper rose and fell;
And, oh! the sting left in its wake
Mere words can never tell.

COBLEIGH'S SHIRT BAND.—Cobleigh says that when he was married he weighed ten stone, and a fourteen-inch band was very comfortable on his shirt. But now that he weighs twelve stone and a half, it naturally follows that the collar band should be proportionately increased in size; but his wife totally disregards this equitable conclusion, and persists in making fourteen-inch bands to his new shirts.

In consequence, Mr. Cobleigh experiences much distress in getting the band buttoned, and very frequently is obliged to call in his wife to help him, which that admirable woman fails to do by buttoning the skin of his throat in with the button.

The fact that these bands are only fourteen inches, when they should be fifteen, is a source of another and, if anything, much greater aggravation than bringing their ends together.

The band sits so close to his neck that it not only endangers his life by shutting off his breath, but renders the attachment of a collar an almost hopeless undertaking, in that it leaves no space to insert a guiding and sustaining finger.

One Sunday morning Mr. Cobleigh thought he had reached the culminating point in his domestic misery. Mrs. Cobleigh was out in the kitchen attending to the finishing touches of her morning duties, and Mr. Cobleigh was sitting up in bed, trying to button his shirt at the neck.

He had his neck stretched to its utmost tension, with a view to reducing its circumference as much as possible; his head was thrown back, and his face, which was red and mottled, was twisted into a grimace expressive of the most poignant suffering.

In this condition he was making herculean efforts to encompass his object, and was failing most signally. Anyone simply studying his face, without catching as much as a glimpse of his fingers, could accurately measure his success.

There was first the look of suppressed interest as he brought the two points together without letting either slip, which gradually merged into one of hysterical doubt as the hole partly slipped over the button; and this was succeeded in turn by an expression of quivering expectation as but one move more remained to accomplish complete success.

Every nerve in his body tingled at this point, every muscle was stretched to its greatest tension. He gave the last pressure—the eyelet quivered an instant, then hesitated—then slipped, and both ends suddenly dropped apart, and with lightning rapidity the features of Mr. Cobleigh became convulsed with passion, while his ungovernable screams resounded through the house.

Mrs. Cobleigh, like a faithful wife, was on hand at once, and was somewhat horrified at the spectacle of the foaming Cobleigh sitting bolt upright in bed, and glaring like a maniac at the fireplace. She came to his rescue at once, brought the ends round his swelling throat, nipped up the flesh to a degree that made him howl, and succeeded finally not only in getting the button into the hole, but also a good half-inch of skin with it. She then threw him a collar, and whisked out of the room again.

It very soon transpired that Mr. Cobleigh's troubles had only just commenced. He looked at the collar moodily for a moment or two, and then picked it up and essayed to put it on.

The masculine reader is already aware that an infamous mode of making shirt-buttons, lately introduced, is without any shoulder at all. It was hard enough, in all conscience, to fasten a collar with the old-fashioned button to cling to, but now no man with a spark of emotion in his composition can possibly hitch to the pearl wafers in use without becoming visibly and most unpleasantly affected by the operation.

Mr. Cobleigh has several sparks of emotion in his nature—Mrs. Cobleigh says he is a bunch of them. As there was no possibility of getting a finger under the band at the back, he could use but one hand, and he applied that with commendable industry. His head was bent forward now, and his eyes protruded to such a degree that the tears which were forced from them dropped clear of his cheeks. He could almost hear his spine crack from the pressure he was subjected to, and his arms at the shoulders appeared to be his worst enemies.

Ever and anon a cry of mingled rage and disappointment was wrung from him, supplemented by an explosive phrase which it is not necessary to print. It was on the explosion of one of these phrases that Mrs. Cobleigh again took the alarm, and came beaming in to learn the trouble.

With the instinct of affection she started to his relief, but her irate husband no sooner saw her than he flew into an unaccountable passion, and declared with much heat that "when he wanted her he'd send for her, and he'd put on that collar himself or he'd bust every shirt in the house."

And he went at it with renewed energy, and every time he thought he had it, his thumb would slip by or over the top, and every time his thumb slipped he would slap it under his other arm and draw up his body in the greatest pain, and grind his teeth.

Suddenly and most unexpectedly the back button took hold, but not until he had suggested to his wife that hereafter she had better sew the button on the inside of the band, and put a patch over it, and then perhaps he could get his collar on within a fortnight.

But his success ended here. In vain he plied his aching and blistered thumb to the button in front; in vain he pranced about and smote his fists together—the ends would not fasten, and finally, becoming exhausted, and puffing like a porpoise, he tore the collar from its fastening, and grinding it beneath his heel, vowed most vehemently that no woman would put a collar on him without passing over his dead body.

Upon that he strode moodily into the garret, while Mrs. Cobleigh, with an aching heart, and feeling unfitted for worship, seated herself at the front window, and looked through the blinds at the neighbours going to church.

CHUBB'S CLOCK.—Chubb's clock got out of order recently, and began to strike wrong. That was the cause of the fearful excitement at his house a short time since. They were all in bed sound asleep at midnight, when the clock suddenly struck *five*.

The new servant girl, happening to wake just as it began, heard it and bounced out of bed under the impression that morning had come; and, as it is as dark at 5 a.m. in winter as it is at midnight, she did not perceive her mistake, but went down into the kitchen and began to get breakfast.

While she was bustling about in a pretty lively manner Chubb happened to wake, and he heard the noise. He opened his door cautiously and crept softly to the head of the stairs to listen. He could distinctly hear someone moving about the room, and apparently packing up the china.

Accordingly he went back to his room and woke Mrs. Chubb, and gave her orders to spring the rattle out of the front window the moment she heard his gun go off.

Then Chubb seized his fowling-piece, and, going down to the dining-room door, where the burglars were at work, he cocked the gun, aimed it, pushed the door open with the muzzle, and fired.

Mrs. Chubb instantly sprang the rattle, and, before Chubb could pick up the lacerated girl, the front door was burst open by two policemen, who came into the dining-room. Seeing Chubb with a gun, and a bleeding woman on the floor, they imagined that murder had been committed, and one of them trotted Chubb off to the police station, while the other remained to investigate things.

Just then the clock struck six. An explanation ensued from the girl, who only had a few bird-shots in her leg, and the policemen left to bring Chubb home. He arrived at about three o'clock in the morning, just as the clock was striking eight.

When the situation was unfolded to him, his first action was to jam the butt of his gun through the clock, whereupon it immediately struck two hundred and forty-three, and then Chubb pitched it out of doors.

He has a new clock now, and things are working better.

"PASTRY-MAKING by electricity," is the latest news from the kitchen. We shall shortly see in the baker's window an electric current tart.

A MAN named Nicely was hanged in Kansas a fortnight ago, and the local newspaper published an account of the execution under the heading "Nicely Done."

HE (who on her recommendation has sent her to choose her own birthday present): "Good gracious, six pounds for a bonnet! Why, you told me you could get one for ten shillings."

She: "Yes, ten shillings and up. This is an 'up.'"

OUR TOURIST: "Why do they not put up some protection, a rail, anything, in a dangerous spot like this?" enquired the personally conducted on a mountain side in Switzerland.

"Well," replied the guide: "there has been some talk about it; but the commune thought it would do harm to the neighbourhood. You see an accident or two every season gets the place talked about."

FACTS.

GREEK infantry men are trained in stone throwing.

A MILLION matches are used in Europe every twelve minutes.

THERE are 80,000 barmaids in England, whose hours average fourteen daily, for a wage of ten shillings per week.

MOST of the numerous temples throughout China are painted red; everything lucky and pleasant among the Chinese is of vermilion colour.

THERE is a very singular custom in Manchester Cathedral—namely, the lighting of twelve candles on Christmas Eve and extinguishing one every night till the Epiphany.

AMONGST the privileges enjoyed by the master of a merchant vessel is the right to solemnise holy matrimony, and to make two people one as effectually as though they were tied by a clergyman on shore.

EMPERORS and empresses, kings and queens, write to each other as brother and sister; reigning grand dukes also enjoy this privilege when addressing kings; but sovereigns not possessing royal honours are designated as cousins.

FROGS are mainly juice. If they try to make more than a short journey away from moisture, they will perish for want of water, and then their bodies will dry away. The frog's bones are so soft that they scarcely leave any skeleton.

THE most singular ship in the world is the *Polyphemus*, of the British navy. It is simply a long steel tube, deeply buried in the water, the deck rising only four feet above the sea. It carries no masts or sails, and is used as a ram and torpedo boat.

THE English sovereign's sons and grandsons when created peers are entitled to seats in the House of Lords at the left of the throne, but when, by the death of their father, they become only collaterally related to the sovereign, they sit among the dukes.

PROBABLY the most remarkable knife in the world is that in the curiosity room of a firm of cutlers in Sheffield. It has 1,890 blades, and ten blades are added every ten years. Another curiosity is three pairs of scissors, all of which can be covered with a thimble.

WEATHER forecasts in Great Britain grow more accurate every year, and the Meteorological Council announce with pride that eighty-four per cent. of those given last year were successful. Three years ago nearly seventeen per cent. of the storm warnings were not fulfilled; but now the rate has fallen to seven per cent.

AN operation upon a patient revealed the fact that the disorder was due to the presence of tooth-brush bristles. "Cheap tooth-brushes," remarked the surgeon who had charge of the case, "are responsible for many obscure throat, stomach, and intestinal ailments. The bristles are only glued on, and come off by the half dozen when wet and brought in contact with the teeth.

AT the North Pole there is only one direction—south. One could travel in as many ways as there are points on the compass-card, but every one of these ways is south; east and west have vanished. The hour of the day at the Pole is a paradoxical conception, for that point is the meeting place of every meridian, and the time of all holds good, so that it is always any hour one cares to mention.

THE signalling apparatus invented by Prince Louis of Battenberg, now on trial in the *Royal Sovereign*, has received notices of approbation from various competent naval judges, among them Captain W. H. Hall, of the *Vernon*, who commanded the *Blenheim* during the last naval manœuvres. The contrivance consists of a sort of collapsible spheroid, capable of being opened and shut like an umbrella, visible at sea for a far greater distance than flags, by which the Morse code of signals can be made without difficulty. If Admiral Fairfax and his signalling department report favourably on it, it will probably be universally adopted.

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Secretary of the Ocean Accident & Guarantee Corporation, Limited

"The Old Folks at Home" are always glad to get hold of good reading matter, such as they never dreamt of in their younger days. You might bear this in mind.

SWIFT MESSENGERS.

HUMAN endurance is seldom so severely tested as among the postal members of the Chinese Government between Pekin and Lhassa. These messengers are picked and trained men, who in times of great urgency are required to cover the 4,500 miles between the two capitals in thirty-six days. This is at the rate of 125 miles a day, and the journey is performed on horseback, changes being made every few miles.

The messenger's letters, enclosed in a yellow bag, are never taken off his back except when he changes his dress, which he does once a week. He eats and sleeps at the postal stations, and is under the most rigid restrictions as to articles of diet, and is permitted to sleep only four hours a day.

"JUST LIKE A PAGE."

THE Court pages of old seem to have been forgiven a good deal of mischief, if we are to credit the annals of European Courts. The thought suggests itself that the high dignitaries were at times weary of etiquette and magnificence, and were secretly grateful to an audacious youngster for creating a diversion.

One day an important official of France, who often went to Versailles, was waiting in an ante-chamber for the coming of the king. He leaned back in his chair, and rested his head against the tapestry on the wall. A page slipped up behind him, and with a great pin fastened the official's wig to the tapestry. Just then someone cried, "Here is the king!"

Up jumped the official, leaving the wig hanging to the tapestry, and confronting the king with bare head.

The king repressed a smile, and at once recognised the incident as the work of a page. He insisted upon knowing who was the guilty one, and then ordered him not to appear before him again until he had begged the official's pardon.

The page retired after receiving his orders. At midnight he decided to execute them. He galloped away on horseback to the residence of the official, and waked the household and the whole neighbourhood, declaring that he had a message from the king. The official got out of bed, and put on some of his Court garb in order to receive the king's messenger properly.

At last the page was ceremoniously admitted to his presence. Then the boy said, "Sir, I am here at the king's command. I have come to beg your pardon for pinning your wig to the tapestry."

"Sir," replied the official calmly, "you need not have made such haste."

Then the page retired with much bustle and ceremony. He appeared before the king the next morning, and was promptly asked if he had done as he was told. He answered that he had, as many witnesses could testify. When the king was told how the page had executed his orders he shrugged his shoulders and said, "That is just like a page."

WHERE THE TIME GOES.

A *P. W.* man, whose head is bulging with mathematical problems, has figured out the disposition of every hour of the daily life of an average man.

"Let us assume," says he, "that the sleeping hours of an average man will number eight daily. That is one-third of his time, so that in fifty years your man will have slept, all told, sixteen years and eight months.

"The man who shaves daily at fifty years, probably scraped his face not oftener than three times per week at twenty-five years, while during his first eighteen years a razor never touched his face. Say that the semi-centenarian has averaged two shaves a week for fifty years, and that will give 5,200 scrapes in the half century. At an average of fifteen minutes per shave, the time devoted to this one small element of life will run up to fifty-four days. If a man should not shave in fifty years, and then attempt to make up his proportion all at once, he would have to shave night and day for over two months.

"The average man who is not limited to twenty minutes for dressing, breakfast, and catching his train, consumes about thirty minutes in getting inside his clothing in the morning. Half an hour per day for fifty years would amount to one year, fifteen days, and five hours, so that if a man should dress himself at the start in life for the whole fifty years he would pass two weeks beyond his first birthday anniversary, and this means working twenty-four hours per day.

"A bath should precede dressing, however, and ten minutes a day for that purpose would put a man in the tub for a little over four months and five days out of the fifty years. Why, just a single minute every day spent in hunting for a collar-button means more than twelve days and sixteen hours in the course of fifty years.

"Half an hour to breakfast, forty minutes for lunch, and an hour for dinner a day amounts to almost four years and a half of eating in fifty years of life.

"The man who spends an hour of each day, omitting Sundays, jogging to and from business in a train or 'bus may not realise it, but it is nevertheless true that in thirty years, one year and the greater part of a month of his time will go in that way."

HOW GAMBLERS SUPPORT FOUNDLINGS.

STANDING on the terrace of the Kremlin, my attention was arrested by a large square building, rather of the nature of a barrack. I asked a Russian friend what it was, and the account which he gave me of it induced me to make application to view the great Russian Foundling Hospital, which is probably an unique institution in the world.

It was founded in 1763 by the Empress Catherine II., and is supported chiefly by a State monopoly on the sale of playing cards, which produces a sum of over £100,000 a year. The average number of children brought there every year is 15,000. They are not left surreptitiously in baskets or trapdoors, as they used to be in similar institutions elsewhere.

The mother, or some friend, brings them openly, and takes a note of the number by which the child is inscribed on the register. A receipt is given, which enables the relatives to visit the child, and even to take it away at any time up to the age of ten years. The only questions asked are whether the child has been baptised, and if so, by what name.

For their first few years, the children are farmed out to peasants of approved good character, or handed over to a staff of some eight hundred wet nurses in the establishment. It is said, that these women sometimes bring their own children to the Foundling Hospital and then offer themselves as wet nurses, thereby managing to obtain food and payment in return for looking after their own children. If their children have been allotted to the care of other women an exchange can generally be arranged by means of a small bribe.

As soon as the children are admitted, the first thing is to baptize those that have not been already admitted into the Orthodox Church. They are generally given the name of the saint whose day it happens to be, with that of the officiating pope as a surname. Then they are washed and clothed in the uniform of the place, and next day they are vaccinated and subjected to a medical examination. The healthiest are farmed out in villages, the foster-mothers receiving about 3s. 6d. a month for looking after them under the supervision of the doctor of the district. A mother who gets paid for looking after her own child at home in this way considers herself especially fortunate.

I was greatly interested by my visit to this place, where everything seemed admirably ordered and to go almost by clockwork. There is a large and attentive staff of nurses and doctors, and nothing is neglected that can serve to benefit the children. The simple arts of washing and dressing are brought to a perfection and executed with a rapidity unknown elsewhere.

I shall never forget the sight of these hundreds of infants all having their tubs at the same time. There were rows and rows of copper tubs lined with flannel, and I quite envied the infants the luxury of dabbling there in the warm water. However, they were not allowed to remain long. The moment the regulation two minutes were up they were taken out, rubbed with warm towels on down pillows, and dressed at the word of command.

The arrangements in case of illness are equally perfect. There are different wards for all the different kinds of infectious diseases, and all the newest appliances of surgery are in use there. Altogether, I am inclined to say that the life of a peasant's child would be far happier there and more comfortable than if he had merely been brought up at home.

When the boys grow up, they have to take their turn at military service, like every other good Russian. When they leave the army, they are given a start, either as agricultural labourers, or in some form of mechanics. Two hundred and fifty of them are trained every year at the school of surgery as hospital dressers, in order to be drafted into the army ambulance. When a girl, who has been farmed out, grows up and comes to be married the hospital is always ready to provide her with a wedding outfit.

THE young man of fashion may rail against the smart girl for wearing his style of necktie, but it makes his heart sick to see how neatly she ties it.

LAWYER: "You were in the bar at the time of the event complained of?"

Witness: "Yes, sir."

Lawyer: "Did you take cognisance of the bar tender at the time?"

Witness: "I don't know what he called it, but I took what the rest did."

"A YEAR ago," said a Preston man to a Londoner, "I spent a few weeks in London. One day I saw a machine which bore the inscription, 'Drop a penny in the slot and learn how to make your trousers last.' As I hadn't a great deal of money, I thought an investment of a penny to show me how to save the purchase of a pair of trousers would be small capital put to good use; so I dropped a penny in and a card appeared. What do you suppose it recommended as the way to make your trousers last?"

"Don't wear 'em, I suppose?"

"No."

"What did it say?"

"Make your coat and vest first."

RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION.

MANY years ago a now well-known but then obscure comedian, while under an engagement at a theatre in London, took a fancy to a young fellow who played in the minor parts in the dramas then represented. One day, after rehearsal, he invited him to dinner at a Strand restaurant. After a good dinner the actor called for the bill, and, to his dismay, discovered that he had no money. In changing his clothes in the morning he neglected to take the money from his discarded trousers.

He told the young fellow of the fix he was in, and asked him for a loan. Mortified and chagrined, he answered that all he had was just sufficient to pay his fare home. Then the actor called the restaurant-keeper, and told him the truth about the money. The quickly-excited man raved and stormed at the comedian, saying he had resolved not to be swindled by anyone, and that he would send for the police. At this point a short stout old gentleman stepped up to the proprietor, and said:

"How dare you speak to a gentleman in the way you have done? His mistake was a perfectly natural one, and such as might occur to any man. I'm ashamed of you! I'll dine no more in your house, nor permit my friends to do so in the future. Here, take this!" and the old gentleman took a five-pound note from a fat pocket-book, and handed it to the discomfited landlord, saying, "Deduct the amount of the young man's bill and return me the change."

The proprietor's apologies were unheeded. He handed the old gentleman his change, and again essayed apologies. When in the street the comedian handed his benefactor his card and address, saying that he would send him the amount as soon as he got home. The old gentleman's indignation soon passed away, and beginning to smile, he added:

"That's all right, young man; I've been trying to pass that counterfeit note all day."

THE DEPTHS OF THE PROFESSION.

A MEMBER of the *P. W.* staff had an interview the other day with a man who tours the country with a company of strolling players and a portable theatre.

"The strolling player is quite the most miserable person in existence," said the informant. "His life is absolutely all work, for which he receives literally starvation pay. We change the piece every evening, and give two shows a day, one lasting from 7.30 p.m. to 8.45, and the other from 9 to 10.15. On Saturday we begin at 5 in the afternoon, and finish at 10, giving not only three different plays but a farce as well. In the course of a week we give eight plays and a farce, and very rarely indeed repeat a piece.

"On five mornings of the week we have to rehearse for two hours, and on Saturdays four hours. Then there is the incessant copying out of our parts, for such things as books of words are quite unknown amongst us. This task often occupies four to five hours, and we have to sit up in the early hours of the morning to get it done. Five hours is about all the sleep I can get, and then I have to study my part until night time.

"But this isn't all, by a long way. In my company the actors have actually to serve as ushers. That is to say, when the theatre doors are open we must all appear in evening dress and show the people to their seats; after which we go behind the scenes and dress as fast as ever we can—often a dozen in one compartment. By thus donning evening dress the public are led to believe that we are a wealthy company, and few recognise the quondam usher on the stage.

"Again, the receipts are frequently so small that we dispense with the services of extra men to erect the theatre, and the actors have to take their places. I have often seen the man who plays 'Hamlet' of an evening trying to screw on a door in the morning.

"My wife is the leading lady of our company, while I play the juvenile lead. For playing in about 350 different pieces in the course of a year, and travelling from one place to another, our combined salaries amount to no more than fifty shillings a week."

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HIS OWN VALUATION.

WHEN Count Chambord, the Legitimist claimant to the throne of France, was making his final effort, it was proposed by those interested to raise a subscription of twenty million francs for his benefit.

Amongst those upon whom the agent in charge of the affair called, with a view to soliciting a donation, was a wealthy but penurious nobleman, who had professed, from the first, great sympathy with the count's cause.

Upon the agent making known his errand the nobleman replied pompously:

"My blood is always at the service of his Majesty."

"Yes," replied the agent, as he made his exit, "but we're not going to start a sausage factory."

A FAMOUS WEDDING-RING.

THIS is the wedding-ring of the Verney family of Claydon, Buckinghamshire.

This enormous gold ring, intended to be worn outside the thick military gloves of the time of Charles I., was used by an ancestor of Sir Harry Verney, at the fatal battle of Edgehill. After the fight, when search was made for the gallant Verney, nothing could be found but a gloved hand, firmly clutched round the royal standard, and this ring still remaining on the finger.

With this relic of their ancestor the Verney's solemnise their marriages, though, of course, a lighter circlet is substituted after the ceremony. The last marriage in which this ring was used, was that of Sir Harry Verney to the sister of Florence Nightingale.

TO RAISE THE WIND.

ALTHOUGH at the present day sailors do little more than whistle as an inducement for the wind to blow, there was formerly a time when they resorted to more lively methods.

It was the practice for the crew to tie up four boys to an iron hoop by the left hand and supply them with a stout rope in the other. Then the boatswain would hit one of the youths, all of whom were stripped to the waist, and the injured one would let fly at his next neighbour, who, in turn, "passed it on."

At first the blows were not very hard, but as each boy began to get irritated with the pain, he laid it on thick, and the howls and capers that resulted afforded immense amusement to the men, at the same time being calculated to raise the wind.

AN INCITEMENT TO PIETY.

"THAT is a picture of the old Puritans going to church, Robby," said an American father impressively. "Here you see them tramping through the snow in single file, each man with his gun thrown over his shoulder ready for instant use in case of an attack."

"What did they have to carry guns for?" asked Robby with interest.

"To keep off the Indians," replied the father. "Those are the kind of men that built up this country. Not the bitterest cold, nor the heaviest snow, nor the fact that they went in extreme peril of their lives, could prevent them from performing their religious duties. Just think of our sturdy forefathers when you don't feel like going to church, and remember the hardships they endured to enjoy the privilege of worshipping on Sunday—a privilege which I am afraid you are inclined to hold too lightly."

"Pooh," observed Robby, "I'd go to church every day in the week if I could get a shot at an Indian on the way!"

WHY CREMATION IS NOT POPULAR.

THE greatest misconception entertained about cremation is that it is a very costly means of disposing of the dead. The truth of the matter is, however, that for £15 an entire cremation can be carried out. This includes the Cremation Society's fees, shell, woollen envelope, bearers, and the journey to the crematorium. A coffin is unnecessary, for the body is placed in the oven in a woollen envelope, so that there can be no mistake with regard to the ashes.

I am told by a cremator that the greatest bar to the progress of cremation is the practice of keeping the ashes of departed persons at private houses. In London there are several drawing-rooms in which one may see urns or caskets containing ashes, and so shocked are people on beholding these last relics, that they oppose cremation altogether.

Progress is further hindered by persons who carry these caskets about with them whenever they go on a journey. They have even had to be examined by custom-house officials, and are taken to lodging-houses when the owners desire change of air.

Were it made compulsory for all ashes to be buried or kept at the cemetery—by the way there is a room set apart for urns at Kensal Green—it is estimated that the number of crematoriums in a year's time would have to be doubled.

HE KNEW ALL ABOUT IT.

SHE was a Girton girl of the first water, he a wee bit illiterate. He always tried hard never to betray his uncultured condition, sometimes with terrible results, as witness.

They sat in the concert-room together eating apples, and as the band struck up an exceptionally pleasant air she exclaimed:

"Oh, what a sweet symphony, John!"

"H'm!" answered John, solemnly chewing his fruit. "Yours may be; mine's beastly sour!"

A MAN OF RESOURCE.

IF there was a man who could play cards after the unique fashion pursued by the "heathen Chinee" it was Louis XV. of France.

On one occasion he was playing with a Court favourite, and, on the hands being dealt, remarked that he had four kings. Now, as the courtier himself had one Court card of the kind, it was obvious that the king's assertion was not strictly veracious. But it's an unpleasant thing to tell a monarch he's cheating, so the courtier fell back on his own unbounded resource.

"And I have five knaves, your highness," he replied.

"That is impossible," exclaimed the king, astonished.

"Not at all, your majesty," said the courtier, solemnly. "I was following your example and counting myself."

A STREET PHRENOLOGIST.

"MINE is about the most risky profession there is. Scarcely a week passes but what I get assaulted by some person or other."

Thus spoke a street phrenologist to a *P. W.* representative the other night.

"You see," he continued, "people don't care to be told the truth about their bumps, and one has to be very careful. I had all my business spoilt one evening by telling a man that he lacked force of character. The fellow was a local prize-fighter, the idol of the village, and the consequence was the mob marched me out of the place.

"In the streets I charge a penny for every character I delineate, but for a written account my price is sixpence. Occasionally I do as many as a hundred people of an evening, but never more than that.

"My takings average thirty shillings a week, and most of my work is confined to country villages, for I can't make both ends meet in London. As a general rule, I go from place to place on foot, walking considerably over 3,000 miles in the course of a year. I could never make any profit if I went by rail.

"My audiences are composed of curious people at times. Sweethearts, for instance, will often spend a penny to ascertain whether or not they are suited to each other. I remember a middle-aged man once coming forward to have his bumps examined.

"I remarked that he was fond of flirting, whereupon an old lady, to the delight of the crowd, stepped forward and struck my client a violent blow with her umbrella. She was his wife. Brow-beating and jealous spouses frequently bring their husbands to be examined; but I usually get to know what is up, and let the victim off lightly."

A DIRECTORY ROMANCE.

FROM the directory of its city an American contemporary has picked out a lot of names, and from them told in sketches the following tale:—

I.
Small—Bowie.
Wright—Goodfellow.
Little—Gurl.
Gay—Brunette.

II.
Maiden—Cantwell.
Cross—River.
Flood—Rose.
Tew—Mutch.

III.
Gallant—Champion.
Noble—Fellow.
Donth—Refuse.
Wade—Norcross.
Carrien—Dame.
Other—Shore.

IV.
Offley—Gludu.
Strong—Tallman.

V.
Day—Weeks.
Long Yeaur.

VI.
Sweet—Billadeau.
Strange—Lovejoy.
Huggin—Kissner.
Axner—Marr.
Swares—Freelove.
Handy—Gold.

VII.
Parent—Generous.
Grant—Maide.
Diamond—Ring.
Fitts—Finger.

VIII.
Church—Parson.
Best—Mann.
Gorner—Tripp.
Merry—Holmes.

IX.
Timon—Whing.
Moross—Mann.
Nutall—Bliss.
Fuller—Beher.
Golden—Silver.
Groce—Short.

X.
Trodden—Wurm.
Turner—Round.
Judge—Laws.
Ally—Monie.
Libertie—Aghen.

WHY THEY DISLIKED HIM.

HERE is a suggestive story about a keeper at the Zoological Gardens. He had been employed on account of his supposed fondness for animals, but was soon found to have incurred the enmity of his charges. Their enmity was not shown at once, but presently became universal and strongly pronounced.

It was suspected that while outwardly treating them with kindness he must secretly hurt or annoy them. He denied having done anything of the sort, and his general manner seemed to bear out his protestations. A watch was set upon him, with a curious result.

It appeared that he never spoke to the animals, and for that reason alone his presence was intolerable to them.

POOR WRITING.

MR. CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER, the famous American author, is credited with telling a story of the American Civil War time at his own expense.

He was editor of a daily paper at Hartford, and was doing his best to arouse the patriotism of his readers. One day a type-setter came in from the composing-room and planted himself before the editor.

"Well, Mr. Warner," he said, "I have determined to enlist."

With mingled sensations of pride and responsibility the editor replied that he was glad to see that the man felt the call of duty.

"Oh, it isn't that," answered the compositor, "but I'd rather be shot than try to set any more of your copy!"

HIS PERFORMANCE.

SOME time ago I was one of the audience assembled to witness a travelling circus company's exhibition. At the end of one of the temporary seats a stout old gentleman had deposited himself, the remaining space being occupied by several people who formed our party.

As they rose simultaneously during an interval, with the result that the seat instantly capsized, its remaining occupant turned an agile somersault and landed in the centre of the ring.

Having regained his equilibrium, and his hat, which had rolled with him, he turned to the amused spectators, and, bowing, said:

"There, ladies and gentlemen, that is my performance. I had not intended to give it, but I am glad you are pleased."

Needless to say, the applause was hearty.

BABIES AS BAIT.

NICE, fat, juicy little brown babies in Ceylon become of service to their parents in a much shorter space of time than do their little white brothers and sisters. Their first occupation in life takes place at a very early age, and consists of sitting on the banks of a stream and enticing unsuspecting crocodiles to come out of the water and eat them.

When the saurian thinks fit to accept this invitation, he shakes off his *ennui* and strolls up towards the dainty morsel, but before he reaches it the sportsman, who has taken up his position in a place of retreat close at hand, shoots him.

Ceylon parents have great faith in Englishmen, and are willing and even eager to allow their offspring to be put to such a use for a small consideration, the small consideration usually taking the form of the slaughtered animal after the head and skin have been detached by the hunter.

A CAT'S FALSE TEETH.

THERE is actually a cat in existence that goes about with a set of false teeth in her mouth. She had been maltreated by a schoolboy and had lost all her teeth, the consequence was that she could only take "spoon-meat." The most succulent rat no longer appealed to her. She turned up her dainty nose at fish-bones, and would consume nothing of greater consistency than bread and cream. The only thing left to do was to send for a dentist.

He found it a very difficult task to obtain a cast of the cat's mouth, as she objected to the process very forcibly, but that was nothing compared to her struggles when the plate had to be put in.

She wriggled about and struggled with the dentist, and not only refused to sit in his green velvet chair, but even went so far as to scratch and bite him when he tried to screw the plate into position.

When at last it was fixed, she made terrific efforts to get it out again, not understanding that it was her only passport to the pleasure of the table. She scratched and made a big back at everyone who came near, and for a time it was feared that she might lose her reason, but after a fortnight of frenzy she suddenly discovered the advantage of the improvement, her old appetite returned, and she became even more affectionate in her disposition than she had ever been before.

"The Song that Reached my Heart" may have been a very beautiful and touching one, but it isn't half so beautiful and touching as that poem on pages 1 and 2 of P.W. CHRISTMAS NUMBER. You just see.

HOME NOTES.

A PAGE MORE PARTICULARLY FOR LADIES.

ISOBEL *will be glad to answer, in this page, questions of general interest upon household matters, so far as space permits. Envelopes should be marked* HOME NOTES.

Nails that are to be driven into hard wood should have their points dipped in tallow.

Silk Handkerchiefs should not be ironed until thoroughly dry. If the fabric is thus treated the desired gloss will be produced by the iron.

Bamboo Sticks, which can be bought very cheaply, make the best curtain rods for muslin curtains. A hem should be made wide enough for the bamboo to run through.

A Lamp Wick is apt sometimes to stick so that it cannot easily be turned up. Cure it by drawing out two or three strands of the wick on one side, and the trouble will be gone.

Small Fires that require constant remaking are no economy. Far better is it to make up a good fire that will last several hours without poking. More heat is given out and less coal burnt.

White Indiarubber, such as is used for hot-water bottles, mackintosh rugs, etc., can be made as good as new. Take one of the finest kinds of crystal soap, with a wet rag apply the soap to the rubber, wash off with clean water, and wipe dry. (*Reply to* RHODA.)

Table Salt is most objectionable unless it is kept thoroughly dry and finely pulverised. This in our damp winter climate is difficult unless the salt-jar can be always kept on the mantelshelf. Another plan which I have recently tried is the addition of a small amount of powdered starch.

Children's Amusements in Winter. Don't we all know the children who complain on dull winter days that they don't know what to do. Those who need not are lucky. Give them some clay for modelling and that cry will never be heard again. Envelop them in pinafores and no harm will be done. It is an inexpensive amusement, and also an improving one to the child's eye.

Milk Soup. Slice two Spanish onions, a turnip, and a head of celery. Boil them till tender in a pint and a half of light stock or water. When cooked, pass all through a sieve. Return to the saucepan with a pint of milk, and season with white pepper and salt. Stir a tablespoonful of cornflour into a paste with cold water; add this to the soup to make it of the right consistency. Boil it for two or three minutes, and serve.

Parsley and Ham Savoury. Take about three ounces of lean ham and pass it through the mincing machine, add a lump of butter to it and place in a small saucepan. Season with a little cayenne pepper. When the ham is quite hot, stir about a teaspoonful of finely-minced parsley into it, and spread on small square pieces of hot buttered toast. This may be made pretty by a little dusting of grated yolk of hard-boiled egg. Serve very hot.

An Inexpensive Plum Pudding recipe is what I am being asked for on all sides, and so I give one that I have used for years. Three-quarters of a pound of raisins, three-quarters of a pound of currants, three-quarters of a pound of flour, three-quarters of a pound of suet, half a pound of bread-crumbs, two eggs, half a pound of treacle, a teaspoonful of ginger. Warm the treacle, and add a little milk. Be sure to have the suet chopped very fine and the fruit carefully prepared. Boil for six hours.

A Good Idea for Baby. Children of a year old or thereabouts are the most trying to mothers and nurses. They do not care to be nursed, and are only happy when scrambling about the floor, and getting into all kinds of mischief. I was visiting a friend a day or two ago who is obliged to look after her baby. When she could not devote all her attention to him, where was he? In a delightful cage, which had wooden supports at each end, and the rails round were of strips of woollen material. My attention was so riveted with this delightful arrangement that I had to comment on it. My friend was quite amused at my ignorance. "Why," she said, "it is the square nursery deal table turned upside down. I wind this round to keep baby in. I put him and his toys in it. He is quite happy, and I can do my work without constant interruptions, which I should have were he scrambling about. We were brought up thus when we were children, so I treat my babies in the same way." Such an excellent plan must commend itself to my readers, I feel sure.

Never Fold Up Dresses when turned inside out. If folded on the outside they will not crease.

Keep the Paraffin Can Corked, for two reasons: to prevent evaporation and to ensure the oil giving good light, which it will not do if exposed to the air.

A Good Laundry Hint. When damping clothes preparatory to ironing or mangling, use a small watering-pot with a fine rose. In this way clothes are damped evenly all over. When sprinkled by dipping the hand in water, the work is only done in patches and in an imperfect way.

Milk Biscuits. Warm two ounces of fresh butter in a gill of milk, and with it wet a pound of well-dried flour into a stiff paste. Beat it with a rolling-pin, and work it very smooth. Roll out to one-eighth of an inch thick, cut into small round cakes; prick each with a fork, and bake for ten minutes in a brisk oven. (*Reply to* ANTONIA.)

Savoury Soufflé. Mix together a pint of bread-crumbs with a dessertspoonful of sweet herbs, a teaspoonful of grated lemon rind, pepper and salt. Beat two eggs lightly, add a breakfast cup of milk. Pour this into the dry ingredients, mix all together, beat for two or three minutes. Pour into a greased pie dish and bake. When a nice golden brown turn and serve.

My Baking Powder Recipe is always in demand, so here it is again:—Take a quarter of a pound of carbonate of soda, quarter of a pound of tartaric acid, and half a pound of ground rice or cornflour. Dry and mix all the ingredients thoroughly, and then pass them twice through a wire sieve. Place in small tins for use. (*Reply to* DAISY, Portsmouth.)

Restore your Silk Hat thus: When next it is wet, handle it very lightly. When it is as dry as possible, smooth with a silk handkerchief, then apply a soft brush. If any portion of the nap be found to stick together, damp it slightly with a sponge moistened with beer or vinegar, and brush it before a fire till quite dry. (*Reply to* STOCK EXCHANGE.)

Hashed Heart. Cut a cold roast heart in thin slices, dip each slice in flour, chop an onion finely, fry in dripping till brown, dredge well with flour, and then add gradually half a pint of stock; stir until smooth. Lay the meat in the gravy, simmer till warmed through, serve with the gravy (which should be thickened) poured over. Garnish with carrot or pickled walnuts and sippets of toast.

Habits of Neatness should be cultivated by everyone. Very often a little forethought in the mistress will save the servant hours of work. For instance, I am always distressed to see anyone sit down to unpick an old dress without spreading a sheet over the floor to catch the bits of cotton and the accumulation of dust in the frock. These are both difficult to eradicate from a good carpet.

To Cleanse the Air of a Room, place a lump of camphor in a saucer and apply a very hot poker to it. This will cause strong fumes, which cleanse the air very speedily, and at the same time act as a powerful disinfectant. Do not apologise for troubling me, for I am always glad to help my correspondents, and also to give publicity to this simple recipe, which is not as widely known as it should be. (*Reply to* HODSON, Rugby.)

A Good Dado for Hall Passages. I know how trying it is to see the painted or colour-washed walls of the hall spoilt by being knocked. This is to some extent due to carelessness in bringing in luggage, etc. But again, we know that the smallest knock will disfigure the wall. Take my advice and procure some plain coloured straw matting, red or green, and nail it against the wall. This will form an indestructible and handsome addition to your house, and the outlay will not be very great. (*Reply to* DORA, Highgate.)

A Good Soda Cake. For this the following ingredients are necessary:—Three-quarters of a pound of flour, three ounces of lard or dripping, a quarter of a pound of sugar, five ounces of currants, ditto sultanas, a piece of candied lemon-peel, a quarter of an ounce of ground carraway-seeds, a small teaspoonful of carbonate of soda, two teaspoonfuls of vinegar, and half a pint of milk. Wash and dry the currants and sultanas. Rub the fat into the flour, add all the dry ingredients, well mix them, and make into a dough with the milk; add the vinegar, and, if necessary, a little more milk; beat well. Place in a well-greased tin, and bake in a moderate oven for one and a half to two hours. The object of the vinegar is to take off the taste of the carbonate of soda. (*Reply to* ANNETTA.)

Bread Making. Do not use too much salt in making bread, or the loaves will not be light.

When Washing Windows put a little ammonia in the water. This economises labour, and gives brilliance to the glass.

Pork Chops. Cut some nice chops from a loin of pork, trim them neatly, sprinkle each with pepper and salt, and boil over a clear fire. Mince very finely a little onion, add some powdered sage, and blend with butter. Put a piece of the mixture on each chop before serving.

To Remove Oil Stains from Carpet. Make a paste with fuller's earth and soft cold water. Spread this thinly on the stained parts of the carpet. Let it dry thoroughly, then brush off with a stiff brush and all traces of grease should have disappeared. I have tried this successfully more than once. (*Reply to* READER.)

French Potatoes. Melt two ounces of dripping in a frying pan. Slice an onion and chop it fine. Fry in the dripping to a nice brown. Then cut up about a pound of parboiled potatoes in chips. Fry them until brown, season with pepper and salt, and just before serving sprinkle a tablespoonful of finely chopped parsley over. This is a very good way of cooking potatoes to serve with cold meat.

Fried Apples and Sausages form a very good dish, and one that has the advantage of being a novelty. First prick the sausages and fry, turning frequently so as to brown all sides equally. These will take twenty minutes to cook over a moderate fire. When done arrange on a hot dish. Have some apples cored, and cut into slices of half an inch thick, and fry these in the same pan as the sausages were cooked till tender and slightly browned. Serve round the sausages in the same manner as potato chips.

Rabbit Pudding is a useful dish in a family, and one I should like to see more often made. For it have one pound of flour, three ounces of suet, a rabbit, and some slices of bacon or pork. First rub the shredded suet into the flour, and add a teaspoonful of baking-powder, and mix it with a little cold water into a paste. Line a basin with this, fill it with the rabbit, which should be cut into neat pieces, seasoned with pepper and salt. Mix in the bacon, add a little water or gravy. Cover the basin over with the paste, tie a cloth over it, and boil slowly for about two hours and a half. Some people would appreciate a little chopped onion with the rabbit.

Parsnip Wine. Boil four pounds of parsnips till tender in each gallon of water. If more convenient the parsnips can be boiled in less water and boiling water added to make up the quantity. Strain the liquor through a sieve or coarse cloth, and be careful not to bruise the vegetables. Add three pounds of sugar to every gallon of liquor. Then boil it again for twenty-five minutes. When the liquor has cooled to seventy-five degrees, put a little yeast into it; let it stand for about six days in a warm place, stirring it every day from the bottom. Pour the liquor into a cask, and, as it works over, keep filling it up with some of the reserved liquor. When the wine has ceased fermenting, bung it up tightly, and at the end of a year bottle it. (*Reply to* BLANCHE.)

Isobel

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1893. MAY.					JUNE.					JULY.					AUGUST.				
S		7	14	21	28	S		4	11	18	25	S		2	9	16	23	30	
M	1	8	15	22	29	M		5	12	19	26	M		3	10	17	24	31	
T	2	9	16	23	30	T		6	13	20	27	T		4	11	18	25		
W	3	10	17	24	31	W		7	14	21	28	W		5	12	19	26		
T	4	11	18	25		T	1	8	15	22	29	T		6	13	20	27		
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SEPTEMBER.						OCTOBER.						NOVEMBER.						DECEMBER.					
S		3	10	17	24	S	1	8	15	22	29	S		5	12	19	26	S		3	10	17	24	31
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1894. JANUARY						FEBRUARY.					MARCH.					APRIL.				
S		7	14	21	28	S		4	11	18	25	S		4	11	18	25	S	1	8	15	22	29
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SNAKE POISON AND HUMAN POISON.

THE bite of the rattlesnake is almost always fatal to man. Yet this snake is never affected by the injection of its own poison into its own blood, neither when enraged it bites itself nor when its venom is injected by artificial means to test the question. Speaking on the latter point Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, an expert on snake poison, says: 'I have over and over tried this experiment, but in no case have I seen death result. Why should this be?"

Dr. Mitchell further says: "The many noxious compounds *man* carries in his liver and gastric glands (the stomach) are fatal if they enter the blood in any large amount. There is scarcely an organ in man's body which is not a possible source of poison to him. Small doses are constantly passing into and out of his blood. The question is whether he can get rid of it as fast as it accumulates."

Alluding to death by rheumatism, gout, and kidney disease, an eminent London physician says: "Thus man is poisoned by the products of his own body."

Now let us cite a passage from a man's experience as related by himself. The time extends over a period from March, 1888, to May, 1889, more than a year. He says: "My head used to whirl around, and I had frequent bouts of faintness and giddiness; and *at such times I used to fall down, no matter where I was. This would occur two or three times a day.* For three weeks I was confined to my bed. I grew gradually weaker and weaker, and lost a deal of sleep. I felt worse tired in the morning than when I went to bed. After a while I became nervous, and my legs trembled and shook under me to such a degree that I feared to walk out. I had great pain in my kidneys, and the secretion which I voided from them was thick and yellow as the yolk of an egg. Month after month passed and I failed more and more, and could hardly crawl about.

"I had a doctor attending me, but his medicines did not benefit me. He said my liver and kidneys were in a bad way, and that he never saw secretions passed in such a state. After treating me six months, he told me that medicine could do no more for me and advised me to go to a hospital. I went to the Peterborough Hospital, but got worse while there. The hospital doctors refused to tell me what ailed me. Having spent two months there, I got anxious and returned to my home utterly disheartened. I continued to send to the hospital for medicines, which I took for three months longer. I was now so emaciated that my friends who came to see me said I would never get well.

"In this condition I continued until May, 1889, when one day an umbrella vendor called at my house, and, seeing how ill I was, said his wife had been cured of a serious illness by Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup. He spoke so earnestly of it that I determined to try it. After taking the Syrup for ten days I felt in better spirits; my food agreed with me, and from that time I gained strength daily. Persevering with it, I was soon able to return to my work as healthy and strong as ever. Since then I have been in the best of health. You are at liberty to publish the above facts, and I will gladly reply to any inquiries. Yours truly (Signed), READ WELFARE, Ramsey, St. Mary's, Hunts, February 18th, 1892."

No brief comment can do justice to this remarkable case. What the public needs to know and to remember is this: Mr. Welfare's whole system was poisoned by the products of a torpid and inactive digestion. These had entered his blood, as Dr. Mitchell describes. The nervous system was disordered and half paralysed; hence the faintness and falling fits. Rattlesnake poison kills by paralysing the nerves which actuate the lungs; it kills by suffocation. Human poison, arising from indigestion and dyspepsia, always operates in the same direction, causing asthma in its worst forms. It then attacks the heart and kidneys, causing the state of things Mr. Welfare mentions. Nothing more noxious, or, in the end, surely fatal exists in any poisonous reptile And yet people trifle with the disease! and doctors seem not to understand it.

Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup cures by stimulating the kidneys, skin, and bowels, and toning the gastric glands.

Who, then, is man's most deadly enemy? Careless and ignorant man himself. Use the remedy when the earliest symptoms appear.

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N.B.—All lovers of music should at once send for our New Illustrated Privilege Price List for musical season 1893-4 now ready. 150,000 of these valuable lists sent out yearly. Send 1d. stamp to CAMPBELL & CO., Musical Instrument Makers, 116, Trongate, Glasgow (Established 50 years.)

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HOW TO DEVELOP MUSCLE And Improve the Physique. By W. M. VARDON, Gymnastic Instructor, Uppingham School, Member of the British College of Physical Education, &c. Shows how the muscular system can be developed easily and with benefit to health, and gives a set of muscle-building exercises. *Post free, Four Stamps,* from W. M. VARDON, Uppingham.

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WHAT CAN WE TELL YOU?

THIS week we will give the usual fifty copies of the smallest book in the world, with magnifying glass and case, to the fifty persons who send in the best anagrams on the words PEARSON'S CHRISTMAS NUMBERS. The apostrophe may or may not be used. Post early, with coupon from first page of cover.

WITH this issue this page resumes its familiar aspect. The two or three more articles which I am writing about America will for the time being occupy the place of WORKERS AND THEIR WORK. I take this opportunity of thanking the many readers who, while writing on other subjects, have expressed a hope that my trip was an enjoyable one. It was, in every way.

QUITE a number of correspondents have sent cuttings from daily papers which report a recent breach of promise case, in the course of which the following occurs :—

Defendant said plaintiff's father was a fool. She had just lost her father, and was very indignant. She had *Pearson's Weekly* in her hand. She was unconscious of having done anything, but defendant said she struck out his tooth and knocked off his hat with *Pearson's Weekly*.

Dear me! The jokes in that number must have been uncommonly heavy.

DICKYBIRD writes from Charing Cross Hospital, London, to point out the fact that in a recent list of results of an examination for medical students, the following names occur in the order given: Parrot, Partridge, Pidgeon.

MR. EDWARD CARNEGIE writes from Braila, a town in Wallachia, Roumania, to say that the recent statement in one of the OLD WORLD'S FAIR articles, to the effect that sterlets are only found in the Volga, is an error, as they are found in the Danube, and he very often makes a meal of them. Mr. Carnegie, too, disagrees with the statement that the sterlet surpasses all other fish in flavour, as he prefers to it the "brown troutie" of his native Scotland.

H. H. intends to make a tour of Turkey on his bicycle in the early part of next year, and is anxious to know what sort of roads and accommodation he is likely to meet with.——I have never been to Turkey on a bicycle, and I don't know anyone who has, so I am afraid I cannot tell you where to find out anything about the highways and inns in that part of the world. Surely you had much better have chosen some other stretch of country; the scenery isn't really worth going to look at, except along some parts of the coast, and the natives are not conspicuous for their hospitality, especially towards wheelmen. In fact, you won't be able to get into Constantinople on your machine. The Turkish authorities look upon a bicycle as a sort of ogre, and anybody they find riding one is promptly incarcerated.

BOMBAY READER writes to say that he has just got a copy of the issue of *P. W.* in which an instance of negro spelling appeared in the shape of a notice to the effect that "Fizzlin Sighds" was to be obtained at a certain drinking saloon under the proprietorship of a coloured gentleman in the United States. My correspondent says that in his town there is a native baker over whose door appears the startling legend—

EUROPEAN] LOAFER.

Truly a little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

GO-AHEAD asks me a very interesting question. He says: "Supposing a child were born of deaf and dumb parents, miles from any living being, and grew up without hearing the sound of a human voice. Would that child be able to speak?"——No, certainly it would not. To produce vocal sounds the muscles of the larynx have to be delicately adjusted, and this cannot possibly be effected without the person first of all hearing the sounds he wishes to repeat. He would probably give vent to unintelligible grunts and snorts like one of the lower animals, but he would be quite unable to understand human language. By heredity he would possess the necessary chords for speech, but he would not know how to use them. That is why children born deaf are almost invariably dumb; not because they don't have the power of articulation, but because they have no means of discerning the variations in sounds without which speech is impossible.

A. R. M. sends a note of a curious football coincidence. He says:—

On a recent Saturday the two premier clubs of the metropolis, the Blackheath and London Scottish, tried conclusions. The first fifteens played at Richmond, the "A" teams at Blackheath.

The match at Richmond resulted in a draw, one try each, at Blackheath a draw, neither side scoring.

At Richmond a Blackheath man was placed *hors-de-combat* with a broken nose and left the field; at Blackheath a Scottish man similarly suffered and left the field.

At Blackheath the receipts at the Charlton gate were exactly £1. The Old Dover Road gate exactly £1.

The takings on the stand exactly £1.

R. K. L. asks me which is the fastest machine vessel that has ever been made to go for any considerable distance.——So rapid are the strides we are making in the speed of craft, that by the time this issue appears a faster boat than the one of which I can tell you may have been constructed. But up to the moment of writing this paragraph, Thorneycroft's torpedo-boat *Ariete*, recently launched from their works on the Thames, can walk away from anything of the kind yet invented at the rate of thirty and a quarter miles an hour, or a little over twice the speed of a South-Eastern express train.

B. M. F. writes from Sumner, Washington, U.S.A., to tell me that the lowlands in his part of the world are so wet and the ground so soft that the farmers are obliged to use mud-shoes for their horses. These shoes are pieces of board, about eight inches wide by ten inches long, strapped to the horse's hoof by a steel band. The animals soon get accustomed to wearing them, and by this means farmers are able to plough land in the spring, where, without the use of mud-shoes, horses would not be able to get a foothold.

H. P. writes anent an article which appeared in *P. W.* a little while ago dealing with a number of instances in which persons had met with their death from trivial causes:

I think the following incident, giving the other side of the matter, might interest your readers. A man lost his right eye at the battle of Sedan twenty-three years ago, and recently complained of some tenderness in the orbit. The medical man to whom he applied placed him under the influence of an anæsthetic, and, upon examination, discovered a leaden bullet almost an inch in length, and weighing about an ounce and a half, fixed solidly in the apex. The man had unconsciously carried this about in his head all that time, and yet suffered only a little irritation more than twenty years after it made its entry.

REFERRING to the paragraph which appeared in this page recently concerning the value of minutes, H. D. Douglas, of Birmingham, writes to say that in his town there is a manufacturer who has just posted up a notice in his factory to the effect that all the girls employed must wear button boots in future instead of laced ones. This is to economise time. He employs 200 girls, and each of them wastes on an average ten minutes a day in tying up her shoe laces in the midst of her work. He pays his girls at the rate of two shillings each a day, and so this tying up of laces represents a total waste of 1,291 days in the year, which is equal to a dead loss of £129.

I HAVE always been an admirer of the excellent literary style adopted by our evening papers, but I confess that the following specimen sent me by a correspondent excels anything I have seen myself:

Yesterday morning, a woman, while trying to get into a tramcar, fell, and another tram passing by nearly ran over her. The horses passed over her, and she rolled over, just managing to escape being run over. When the tram had passed by, the woman (much to the excitement of the passers-by) got up from the ground and ran after the tram car which she failed to catch the first time, and succeeded in catching it uninjured.

MISS N. G. BACON, Hon. Sec. of the Mowbray House Cycling Association, writes me a long letter regarding a poster which the managers of the Stanley Cycle Show are using to advertise their enterprise. Miss Bacon objects, and I think quite justly so, to the manner in which a lady cyclist is depicted in this poster. Here are some of her remarks:—

If the Stanley Show people had been wise, they would have made a Christmas picture of their poster and represented a grotesquely-attired acrobat as the companion of the ballet-girl on the tandem. The picture then would have been excellent from every point of view; interesting to all, and offensive to none.

Is it sufficient only to say that the poster showed bad taste? On the one hand, we have members of households discussing whether or not their girls shall cycle; on the other hand, we have a show got up by those who take upon themselves the position of being the trustees of the cycle-riding public, and who, with their eyes wide open, allow a poster to be exposed in our public thoroughfares which causes unpleasant criticism and comparison to be made upon lady cyclists.

This poster question strikes home to all members of the family. Sensitive and refined natures are hurt by it, and fathers, husbands, and brothers, who have of late somewhat relented in their antagonism to cycling for ladies, are led to defer their consent to a future occasion. Let me tell you of one instance that came under my notice. In a suburban high road, just opposite some detached residences, a whole row of these glaringly coloured posters is painfully visible on some hoardings. A daughter in one of those houses has been for some time trying to coax the head of the household to allow her to learn cycling, and, on discovering the obnoxious posters, would have done anything to have hidden them from sight. But, alas, her father saw them, and remarked rather pertinently at dinner that night that no daughter of his should cycle if he could help it.

MR. A. LATCHFORD, of 20, Millard Road, Stoke Newington, writes to say that his grandmother, who died recently at her residence in the town of Potton, Beds., and who was eighty years of age, left behind her 8 children, 60 grandchildren, and 47 great-grandchildren. In all she had had 17 children, 69 grandchildren, and 56 great-grandchildren, or 142 direct descendants. I think we have noted in *P. W.* one or two instances in which the direct descendants of an old gentleman or lady have even exceeded this number, but in this case the figures are sufficiently remarkable for comment.

THE Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Company write me a long letter referring to a statement in a recent article called THE FRAUD IN LIQUIDS. They take exception to a paragraph in it relating to condensed milk, but I do not think they need have done so, for the article plainly only deals with frauds, and not with such well known commodities as the one that they produce. I am perfectly astounded to learn from the company that they make fifty million one-pound tins of condensed milk every year. Mr. Henri Nestlé has also written to this effect, and to him I have only the same reply to make.

FAT MAN.—Yes, a law for the suppression of corpulency actually existed among the Spartans. Any man who got beyond the standard proportions round his lower chest was whipped, and his obesity exposed to the public gaze. Anti-fat preparations were undiscovered in those days, with the result that when a man found his waistcoat becoming too small for him, the only alternative was to renounce high living—which was usually the real cause—and undergo a course of training. If City aldermen had existed in those happy days, to have seen them stripped and hustled round the market place would have been a sight for the gods and little fishes.

T. K. writes to say that in looking through a Spanish paper the other day, he came across an article dealing with the superstitions that the mothers of various countries labour under with regard to their newly-born children. Amongst them is the following: "The London mother places a book under the head of the new-born infant, that it may be quick at reading, and puts money in its first bath to guarantee its future wealth."——That's very interesting, isn't it? If T. K. has kept the paper, I should be ever so much obliged to him if he would send it along, so that I could have the article translated for *Search Light*. Judging from the sample, it would make really humorous reading, I should think.

A. J. asks: "Why is it that the replies in *P. W.* are so much more interesting than those in any other paper?"——Modesty precludes one very obvious answer to this question; another is probably, I imagine, that as *P. W.* goes in more than any other paper of its kind for solid and reliable matter, those in want of information on some subject select it in preference to other periodicals. We take a lot of trouble in the endeavour to always find replies to questions that are really of general interest.

H. M., writing in reference to the three queer trees recently mentioned in *P. W.*, asks leave to add to them another, *i.e.*, one which supplies razor hones. He says:

My brother-in-law brought a piece home from his last voyage to the East Indies. In appearance the hone is pith-like, but the outside is hard, slightly porous, and very much the colour of a malacca cane. Now I am no hand at sharpening a razor with the ordinary strops, I usually put one edge on and two off, but with this one I can raise a really fine and excellent edge.

C. B.—There is no reason why you should be in doubt as to the best way in which to dispose of spare shillings for charitable purposes. Send them along to us for next year's FRESH AIR FUND. There is no way in which you can make a small amount do so much.

G. HART and other correspondents are advised that London is not going to be skipped in the GREAT TOWNS COMPETITION. The fact of the matter is that we shall divide London up into ten or twelve different districts, and we think it well, as this is so, to leave London till the end.

H. S.—Alas! I am afraid I cannot make any alteration in the time of publishing *P. W.*, even for so good a reason as to save you an eight-mile ride every Saturday. I am afraid, whatever the day on which the paper were published, it would be impossible that it should be equally convenient for everybody. Many thanks for your friendly remarks, which are much appreciated.

The limited space in this page permits of only a very small fraction of the letters addressed to this office every week being answered in print, but any reader who encloses a stamped addressed envelope with his enquiry, will receive a reply through the post.

POSTAL RATES.

All Post Free.	*Pearson's Weekly.*	*Short Stories.*	*Search Light.*	*Industries and Iron.*
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THE JOHN NOBLE HALF-GUINEA COSTUMES

10/6

Direct from the Manufacturer to the Wearer by means of the Parcel Post, at less than half ordinary prices, being a perfect revolution in the cost of garments for Ladies' wear.

Almost every paper in the United Kingdom has bestowed unlimited praise on these remarkable Costumes, which are

MADE FROM THE JOHN NOBLE CHEVIOT SERGE (Regd.),

A fabric of great durability and world-wide fame. These costumes are supplied complete, as illustration, for the ridiculously low price of 10/6 each. Packed in box and sent carriage paid for 9d. extra.

Colours: Navy, Brown, Grenat, Myrtle, Reseda, or Black.

Every Costume is well made throughout, no slop work whatever being allowed, and consists of a Blouse shape Bodice, pleated back and front, with full sleeves, bound seams, and belt attached; the saddle and sleeves are well lined, and the bodice can be worn inside or outside the skirt, which is a full stylish shape (40 ins. long), with a deep inside facing of the same material at the bottom, thus ensuring extra advantage in wear. The lower part of the skirt, and the cuffs, collar, and saddle of bodice are trimmed with rows of narrow Black Russia Braid, the whole thus forming one of the neatest and most serviceable Costumes ever introduced for Ladies' wear.

The sizes kept in stock will fit any figure up to 38 ins. round the bust under arms. Larger or special sizes made to order at a cost of 1/6 extra.

☞ *Don't make any mistake, John Noble's price, 10/6, is not for the mere Dress Length, but for the Complete Costume made up and ready for immediate we*

The Bazaar, Exchange and Mart says—"Without exception the most marvellous dresses we have ever seen are those of Cheviot Serge sold by Mr. John Noble at 10s. 6d. The material is sound and not at all common looking, while the dresses are thoroughly complete, even to the insertion of a pocket in the skirt, and the bodices are nicely finished."

Myra's Journal remarks—"I cannot speak too highly of the manner in which these dresses and frocks are made and finished off; but seeing is believing in this case, and I could not have believed, without seeing them, that anything half so good could have been produced at the prices charged."

Leach's Family Dressmaker says—"Imagine a Complete Costume in several fashionable tones for 10s. 6d., and some prettily-fashioned frocks for children from 1s. 6d. upwards. They are perfect marvels, and, moreover, *not* slop made; for this I can vouch."

Mrs. A. G——, Crieff Road, Aberfeldy, writes—"To say I am pleased with th to but feebly express myself. It is a w

Spring Road, Portswood, Southampto C—— begs to acknowledge receipt containing the 10s. 6d. Cheviot Serge which she is much pleased with, a extremely nice and well made for the

HUNDREDS OF LADIES come to the Warehouse daily, to buy these marvellous Costumes, and VISITORS TO MANCHESTER are cordially invited to call and see for themselves what the JOHN NOBLE CHEVIOT SERGE COSTUMES are like.

KNOCKABOUT FROCKS FOR GIRLS

1/6

Are also supplied in the John Noble Cheviot Serge, and are **indisputably the most marvellous value ever offered for Public Sale**, every frock being well made and carefully finished, with saddle top, long full sleeves, belt, and pocket (as illustration). Being loose fitting they thus allow ample room for development of the limbs, and are offered at such low prices that most ladies would refuse to make the frocks for the money even if the materials were supplied free. Please consider these prices:—

Lengths	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45 inches.
Price	1/6	2/-	2/6	3/-	3/6	4/-	4/6	5/-	5/6 each.

Postage 4½d. extra. **Every purchaser delighted.** The Lengths stated are from top of neckband to bottom of skirt in front.

If you have a young girl, just try a Knockabout Frock. Nothing could be better for school or regular wear, and if the frock fails to please cash will be promptly refunded.

THE JOHN NOBLE CHEVIOT SERGE (REGISTERED)

Is undoubtedly the Most Successful Serge yet produced at a low price for Ladies' and Children's wear. Many Serges are sold at a similar price, but in almost every in there is a peculiar appearance of the surface that stamps them at once as being of common or cheap character. The combination, however, of certain yarns used in the manufac the John Noble Cheviot Serge (the outcome of long and careful experiments) has resulted in the perfected production of a fabric that has **never been equalled at the price** in fact, a Serge that, so far as wear and general appearance go, might reasonably be said to be **worth anywhere between 2s. 6d. and 3s. 6d. the yard.** It is manufactured from expressly prepared yarns, woven, dyed, and finished in a manner that places it altogether beyond competition as a fabric of **great durability and sterling value.** Such a useful, reliable, and good-looking material has certainly never before been offered at anything approaching price at which John Noble is offering this Serge. The colours are perfectly fast, and do not spot with rain; every yard is beautifully finished being carefully examined before it is allowed to leave the works, and last, but not least, this Serge may be washed whenever necessary. Being extra double width (52 inches), it cuts to the best advantage in making garments, and every reader of *Pearson's Weekly* can secure

PRESENTS that are useful are always more acceptable than articles made only to look at, and what can be more acceptable as a reasonable gift to a lady or child than one of the JOHN NOBLE CHEVIOT SERGE COSTUMES?

A FULL DRESS LENGTH OF SIX YARDS FOR 7/6

Postage 9d. extra. Colours: Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Grenat, Reseda, or Black.

REMEMBER, The JOHN NOBLE CHEVIOT SERGE is a thick, warm, and durable tailor serge, that WEARS WELL, LOOKS WELL, and COSTS SO LITTLE that every lady should give it a trial, especially as the risk is so small, for John Noble guarantees to refund cash to any purchaser who is not perfectly satisfied on receipt of goods, and he could not afford to do this unless he had the greatest confidence that every purchaser will be simply delighted with the extraordinary value.

The Gentlewoman says:—"How he can afford to do it I really cannot imagine, for the Serge is of such capital quality."
The Bazaar says:—"The material deserves strong recommendation. 6 yards for 7s. 6d. is indeed a wonder."

Send a Postcard for illustrations of John Noble's New & Seasonable Designs in Costumes for Ladies' and Children's wear. They are exceedingly pretty and decidedly cheap.

☞ JOHN NOBLE has just introduced a **Lady's Fashionable Costume Skirt** made in the New Bell Shape from the above Serge. This style is trimmed with two rows of broad black Military Braid, and turned up at the bottom with a deep facing of the same Serge, thus ensuring greater durability in wear; and the Skirt is supplied complete in any of the colours as above for the low price of **3/6**. Packed in box and sent carriage paid for 9d. extra. A beautifully finished Skirt that could not be bought for double the price at any ordinary costumier's. **Ladies' Cheviot Serge Underskirts** (38 ins. long, in any of the above colours), with shaped band, and trimmed five rows of stitching, are also supplied for the ridiculous price of **3/6** each, postage 6d. extra. *Excellence of make guaranteed.*

Model 2.

GIRLS' REEFER OUTFITS,

As illustration, Model 2, are also made in the John Noble Cheviot Serge; colours, Navy Blue and Black only. This style has proved one of the most successful ever introduced for Girl's wear, and consists of a double-breasted Reefer Jacket, very correctly made and finished, with gilt buttons, and lined through with Italian Cloth; also a Costume with full round kilted skirt, the bodice and skirt being prettily trimmed with rows of narrow white Braid. This smart, useful, and decidedly cheap outfit is highly recommended for present wear, as the dress and jacket can be worn together or separately. See sizes and prices as follows:—

Lengths	21	24	27	30	33	36 inches.
Price	6/6	7/6	9/-	10/9	12/6	14/6 each.

Packed in neat Cardboard Box and sent carriage paid for 6d. extra. The lengths stated are from top of neckband to bottom of skirt in front.

MRS. R——, Dublin, writes:—"The Model 2 Reefer Outfit was received yesterday, and it certainly is the most remarkable value I ever saw; in fact it makes me wonder if the price (3s. 6d. *for 21 inches long*) is not the cost of making only, and you have forgotten to add value of the materials used. In any case, kindly send me six more outfits—two each size, 21, 27, and 33 inches. Cheque enclosed, value £2 19s."

MRS. E. M—— Barrow, writes:—"Dear Sir,—I thought you would be interested to learn that the Navy Blue Cheviot Serge Costume I bought for my little girl has been washed with soap and hot water, and it really looks better than when new."

GIRLS' VELVET TRIMMED COSTUME.

As illustration, Model 64, with saddle top, full sleeves, and pocket. The skirt is made in a wide loose-fitting style, and prettily trimmed with a deep crossband of black velvet; the saddle and cuffs are of black velvet, and the pocket is trimmed with the same, the whole thus forming a very graceful little Costume. Colours: Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Grenat, Reseda, or Black. Sizes and prices as follows:—

Lengths	21	24	27	30	33
Price	2/9	3/9	4/9	5/9	6/9

Lengths	36	39	42	45
Price	7/9	8/9	9/9	10/9

Postage 6d. extra.

The lengths stated are from top of neckband to bottom of skirt in front.

Great Thoughts says:—"All who have girls to clothe should certainly see the Cheviot Serge Frocks manufactured by John Noble. The prices are marvellously cheap; indeed it is difficult to see how the material alone could be got for the money. Described by *Myra's Journal* as 'The Knockabout Frock par excellence.'"

Model
From 2/9

Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed "Cunliffes, Brooks & Co.," and made payable to John Noble, Manchester.

£100 REWARD will be paid for such information as shall lead to the conviction of any person or persons representing themselves as JOHN NOBLE'S A purporting to sell goods of John Noble's Manufacture, or infringing any of John Noble's Registered Trade Marks or Designs. John Noble is the o of the Ladies' Half-Guinea Costumes, he is the Sole Proprietor and Manufacturer of the John Noble Cheviot Serge (Registered), also of all the made from this Serge, and he regrets it has become necessary to caution the public against unscrupulous and misleading imitators. *John Noble has no agents, no canvassers, no branches* and he desires particularly to emphasise the fact that the John Noble Cheviot Serge and Garments can only be supplied direct from his Warehouse. *ALL READERS are invited to Patterns (post free) of the John Noble Cheviot Serge, compare the same with any of the imitations offered elsewhere, and the result is left with confidence to their judgment.*

DO NOT HESITATE to send for Patterns of the Serge, also Illustrated Fashion Sheet of Costumes, etc., for Ladies' and Children's wear. You will be delighted with the valu

JOHN NOBLE, LTD., THE WAREHOUSE, 11, PICCADILLY, MANCHESTE

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